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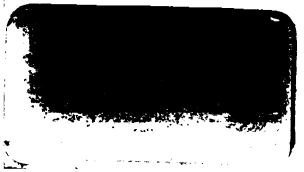

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ALFRED THE GREAT

BORN IN 849.

The Life and Maxims of Alfred the Peacemaker

FROM THE GERMAN OF

ALBERT VON HALLER.

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MODERATE MONARCHY.

PRINCIPLES OF THE

BRITISH CONSTITUTION

IN 1849.

WITH NOTES COMENTARIES & DOCUMENTS

BY

FRANCIS STEINITZ.

LONDON.

Published by Longman & C.

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THE

MODERATE MONARCHY,

OR

Principles of the British Constitution,

DESCRIBED IN

A NARRATIVE OF THE LIFE AND MAXIMS

OF

ALFRED THE GREAT

AND HIS COUNSELLORS.

FROM THE GERMAN OF ALBERT V. HALLER.

TO WHICH ARE ADDED,

NOTES AND COMMENTARIES

ON THE PRESENT STATE OF THE BRITISH CONSTITUTION.

BY

FRANCIS STEINITZ,

AUTHOR OF "THE SHIP, ITS ORIGIN AND PROGRESS,"

&c. &c. &c.

"EXAMINE ALL, ADOPT THE BEST."

London:

LONGMAN, BROWN, GREEN, AND LONGMAN.

1849.

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PREFACE.

WHEN man attains the age of maturity, the illusions of younger years mostly vanish. All that he had ardently desired to acquire in life seems not worthy the exertions; that which he had formerly cherished with the warmest passion, he now looks upon as transient, like all things in this world; and, besides religion and domestic happiness, little remains to attach himself to, as in former years.

Although the enchanting visions of youth—love, fame, and honours—have fled from his sight, the recollections of the grandeur of some ideals, based on history, whom he venerated in his youth, are not wholly extinguished in maturer age.

Such was the impression which Haller's "ALFRED" made upon the translator in his youth, and which has since remained engraved in

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his memory. Many great characters, pictured in history, and others, within his own recollection, who lived in the turbulent times at the close of the last and the beginning of the present century, although appreciated by him, could not eclipse the juvenile impression of the historical romance now before the reader.

The fortunate mixture of grandeur, mildness, and severity, religion and domestic virtues, love of the arts and sciences, combined with valour and heroic deeds, in one individual, also celebrated for his romantic adventures, could not fail to win sympathy and universal admiration, and the more so since not the slightest doubt was held of Haller's veracity, as the fame he had acquired as a philosopher, and author of the poem, the "Alps," was at that time spread all over Germany.

Although this little work, dedicated by Haller to the British nation, in the person of George III., is now out of print, its memory is preserved in every German heart; it having been written at

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a time when liberty and the wish for a constitutional form of government began to dawn in France and Germany; and a French translation of "Alfred," which appeared almost simultaneously with the original, may, like many a writing of that time, have contributed to hasten the catastrophe which, in spite of its awfulness, has proved fortunate in its consequences to the world.

The learned Haller became, in the last years of his life, almost disgusted at all the branches of science,* for which he had done so much during

* Albert von Haller was a great physician, natural historian, and author, in several branches; and one of the most learned men of his time. His works are very numerous, and his biography, written by Zimmerman, and brought to the year 1755, forms a considerable volume. If Haller was a celebrated lyrical poet, he was also a great statesman, and as such very useful to his country. His character was the purest, and he was as excellent a citizen as a father. Although a free thinker he was very religious, and an opponent of Voltaire, with whom he was in constant strife. The renowned Cassanova, having once wished to visit the sage of Ferney, Haller observed to him, that Voltaire "presented an effect in direct opposition to the laws of physics, being greater when seen from a distance than when seen closely." Upon the "Heloïse" of Rousseau, he said "that it was the

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his laborious career, and embraced politics; a proof that the human heart and head do not always feel inclined to give up, even in the most advanced age, *all* the illusions of life; but still endeavour to contribute, by intellectual power, towards the general weal. The translator—who has not the least ambition of comparing himself to Haller—although not living in Switzerland, nor having, like Haller, preserved the serene views of life, but finding himself bending under hypochondria, and beneath a cloudy sky, he has had the same tendency in translating this work that Haller had in writing it.

worst of all romances, because it was the most eloquent." He despised Rousseau's eloquence, as anti-thesical and paradoxical, and to his opinion, that fictions were admitted into romances, opposed Petrarch, whose love for Laura was real. He had the courage to say, in a letter to Frederick II., who would entirely suppress the Latin language, "that in the event of a monarch succeeding in banishing the language of a Cicero and of a Horace from the republic of sages, he would set an eternal monument to the memory of his ignorance," upon which the great monarch renounced his project. Haller's biography and works will be found in almost every Encyclopædia, but the above observations are not so generally known.

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Haller's purpose was to picture, in one work, absolute monarchy, which he did in his historical romance, entitled "Usong;" then, moderate monarchy in "Alfred;" and, finally, moderate republic in a third work, entitled, "Fabius and Cato;" but he scorned to occupy himself with democracy, having witnessed the mischief which it caused, almost under his own eyes, in some Swiss cantons.

In each of these works he has endeavoured to develop the principles of the three several forms of government in their highest degree of perfection; and in choosing the British constitution as a model of moderate monarchy, the only one which he could, in fact, choose for that purpose, he found that Alfred was the only monarch who combined such virtue, wisdom, and heroism, as rendered him worthy of being acknowledged the founder of that constitution, although historians may not attribute that noble work to him.

On the occasion of the author's writing his

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work, "The Ship, its Origin and Progress," he had to make some researches concerning Alfred's ships and history, and found in his library Haller's "Alfred." His youthful reminiscences of that work were immediately revived; and on once more reading it through, he found therein what he did not seek, namely, the fourth book, (in this work the fifth book,*) containing the principles of the British constitution in so simple and popular a form, that this part, which in his youth he had not the patience to read, and much less to study, made in his advanced age more impression upon him than Alfred's deeds had done in his youth.

He then resolved upon attempting this translation, for which he thought the present epoch the most appropriate, and on searching for the modern histories of Alfred, found his deeds more or less

* The Sixth Book of Haller's "Alfred" contained Alfred's love, which, although we do not consider it as worthy of its author, we have given in the Second Book. The Introduction and the Conclusion are not by Haller, but extracted from the works of John von Müller, another Swiss historical author, almost as celebrated as himself.

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described by British historians, but nothing so complete and so brief as Haller's work.

In his researches into Alfred's life, he at first studied the sources whence Haller had derived his knowledge, namely: Asser, John Spelman, Hume, and Littleton; and also used Lappenberg, King, Turner, &c.; but while the present translation was penning, two works appeared almost simultaneously, namely, "Six Old English Chronicles," and "Life and Times of Alfred the Great," which vastly contributed to facilitate his historical researches; and he cannot do less than to publicly thank the learned Dr. Giles, who worked out both the above works, which he owns to have made great use of in the historical notes, and which proved to him that most of what Haller related of Alfred was authentic. Notwithstanding the great credit which the translator gives these works, he trusts that this little book will not be considered as superfluous, as, in spite of the Germanisms, which could not altogether be avoided, it presents a brief, pleasant, and romantic history of the life

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of Alfred, and possesses, besides, a higher tendency, developed in the fifth book.

Small as the work is, it may be divided into three distinct parts:—

1. Alfred's life and deeds: 2. The principles of the British constitution; and 3. Historical and political notes and commentaries, applying to both the preceding parts.

These three parts, as they are now composed, have but one tendency; the author and compiler of the apparently heterogeneous notes and commentaries has united them for *one* purpose, which may thus be considered:—The transformation of the life of nations may be observed in their manners and customs; but the more that life becomes civilized, the more it loses the irrevocable harmony of its primitive condition, the desire of preserving which, does not expire so speedily in the better part of the nation. This preservation cannot be effected by better means than by *warning*, and by the *recollection* of its early stage of perfection.

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The propensities of nations often lose the original purity of their early consecration, and the races, abandoned to themselves, will hardly continue, as they ought, in their primitive state. It is therefore necessary that they should be *led*, until their tottering inclinations are once more strengthened and sufficiently purified to be again abandoned to themselves, to procure a life of unconscious truth.

It is consequently the recollection of the early perfection, and the retrospective view of its former condition, that seem to present the most suitable means of stopping the progress of the commencing corruption.

In such times as ours, when anomaly has begun everywhere, and even around us, we wish to preserve the knowledge of the better situation of our forefathers, that, by reviving it through examples, we may turn the public mind towards it.

While translating "ALFRED," we were induced to study the elements of the British constitution;

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and having observed, with an unprejudiced eye, the progress of the civilization of nations, and principally that of the British for the last half century we have perceived the inevitable consequences which such civilization must produce on the original character of the people. The simplicity of manners and customs, and the probity impregnated in English hearts has partly and successively vanished, and given place to the love of Mammon, which prevails in all classes in this formerly blessed country.

The love of the arts and sciences,—the train of civilization,—has not yet succeeded in inspiring the minds of the people. On the contrary, they are in England mostly considered as the means of procuring money; and ambition, which also attends civilization, and is the great lever of civil and warlike deeds, is equally neutralized by the love of gold and comfort, and does not go farther than making a short speech as a chairman in an assembly, or on obtaining a commission.

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Virtue is suddenly awakened by adversity, or acquired when civilization has attained so high a perfection in enlightened minds, as to replace the simplicity and probity of former times. This is not the case at present in England, and much good is birth-strangled by civilization in the moment of nativity.

Whether a little book, with historical notes, apparently without a systematic order or tendency, can contribute to the remembrance of the former grandeur of the British constitution and high standing probity of the nation, or in the slightest degree forward their regeneration, we do not pretend to decide; but trust the reader will believe that the sole and pure design of the compiler and writer was to do justice to every opinion, and flatter none, that the reader may examine them, and *preserve that which he considers the best;* a little attention will enable him to discover to which of these opinions the author inclines.

The author is far from pretending to be a

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reformer; the times are not always alike, and the world reforms *itself* in the different periods through which it passes. It reforms itself in every epoch just according to the contemporary individuals, and *they* again according to the times; both reciprocally make and reform each other, and both likewise reciprocally change each other.

When, in the organization of nature, and at the critical moment of decay, a new *encheiresis* of life is formed; so soon as the positive direction has been given to the inner re-union, all that is external, all that has faded, whether merely spoiled, or rotten to the state of a dead peel, will break and fall asunder; but it may console us, that if the actual time seems to present such a picture of decay or disorganization, it is obliged so to do because the inner *encheiresis* of life has already begun to form itself.

FRANCIS STEINITZ.

LONDON, JUNE, 1849.

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CONTENTS.

PREFACE, iii.
List of Authors, xv.
Introduction, xxi.

THE FIRST BOOK.

ALFRED THE HERO, 1.

NOTES, COMMENTARIES, ETC.

1. Anglo-Saxons in England, 189.—2. Genealogy of Alfred, ib.—3. Ragnar Lodebrok, 190.—4. Death of Edmund, King of the East Angles, 191.—5. Battle of Reading, ib.—6. Alfred's Brethren, 193.—7. Vide Note 5, ib.—8. Battle of Wilton, ib.—9. Alfred's Vessels, 194.—10. Defeat of the Danish Fleet, ib.—11. Chippenham surprised by the Danes, 195.—12. Adventure of the Cakes, ib.—13. Legend of the appearance of St. Cuthbert to Alfred, and his Visit to the Danish Camp, 197.—14. Capture of the Standard of the Northmen, 200.—15. The Magic Standard, 201.—16. River Stowe, 202.—17. London Rebuilt, and Erection of Castles, ib.—18. Various Conflicts with the Danes in 893-94, 203.—19. Capture of the Danish Fleet on the River Lea, 205.—20. Alfred and Hasting, 206.—21. Flattery, ib.

THE SECOND BOOK.

ALFRED'S LOVE, 29.

NOTES, COMMENTARIES, ETC.

22. Alfred's Marriage, 207.—23. License of Poetical Fiction, 208.—24. Hunting and Falconry, ib.

THE THIRD BOOK.

ALFRED THE LEGISLATOR, 44.

NOTES, COMMENTARIES, ETC.

25. Alfred's Firmness undaunted, 209.—26. A few Remarks on Juries, ib.—27. Anglo-Saxon Legislation before Alfred and Alfred's Code, 211.—28. Division of England into Counties, &c., 215.—29. Burgraves, 217.—30. Golden Bracelets hung on Trees, ib.—31. Ignorance of the Nobility, ib.—32. Abuse of the Confessions of, and suspicion on, a Culprit, 218.—33. Alfred's absolute Power, 219.—34. Catholic Liturgy read in Latin, ib.—35. Alfred's Co-adjutors in Instruction, 220.—36. Pretended Tyranny and Faults of Alfred, 223.—37. Controversies concerning Oxford University, 225.—38. Vide Note 9, 226.—39. Alfred's Military Skill, ib.—40. Sovereignty of the Seas, ib.—41. Alfred's Artistical and Professional Co-adjutors, 227.—41a. Alfred's

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Officers, ib.—42. Parliament in Alfred's time, ib.—43. Alfred's severity, 228.—44. Prerogatives of Earls, 229.

THE FOURTH BOOK.

ALFRED THE SAGE, 65.

NOTES, COMMENTARIES, ETC.

45. City of London rebuilt, 229.—46. Reluctance of the Saxons to build Castles, ib.—47. Foundation of Monasteries, 230.—48. Revenues of the Church, 231.—49. Architectural Works of Alfred, 232.—50. Division of the King's Household, 232.—51. Vide Note 24, 233.—52. Alfred's skill in Jewellery, and description of his Gem, ib.—53. Political Levers of Rulers, 235.—54. Universal Genius and Manual Occupations of Princes, ib.—55. Alfred's Zeal for Religion, 236.—56. Division of Alfred's Revenues, ib.—57. Division of Alfred's Time, 237.—58. Invention of Lanterns, 238.—59. Alfred's Illness, 239.—60. Alfred'sEducation, 241.—61. Alfred's Books, 244.—62. Alfred's Embassies to Rome, 250.—63. Education of Alfred's Children, 253.—Translation of King Alfred's Will, 254.—Translation of King Alfred's Proverbs, 260.

THE FIFTH BOOK.

ALFRED AND HIS COUNSELLOR, 78.

NOTES, COMMENTARIES, ETC.

64. Alfred's Generosity towards his Female Prisoners, 263.—65. Attachment of Subjects to their Sovereigns, ib.—66. Remarks on Aristocracy, ib.—67. Silk Garments in Alfred's time, 267.—68. Monarchical Power does not originate from Adam, 268.—69. Honour and its meaning, 269.—70. Conscriptions, and Purchased Commissions, ib.—71. Momentary Inspirations in the People, 270.—72. Nation of Shopkeepers, ib.—73. Moral Degradation produced by Comfort, 271.—74. Chinese Sages, 272.—75. Comfort produced by Industry and pure Pleasure, ib.—76. Linen Garments among the Anglo-Saxons, ib.—77. Modern Despots, 273.—78. Pastime of Sovereigns, 274.—79. Family Government, ib.—80. Sovereigns driven from their Thrones, 275.—81. Aqua Toffana, ib.—82. Dissipation and False Economy, ib.—83. "J'ai le droit et j'en use," ib.—84. Vide Note 80, 276.—85. Former and actual Punishment of unjust Princes, ib.—86. Beware! beware! beware! ib.—87. Expression of the unfortunate Louis XVI., ib.—88. Fruitless Lesson, 278.—89. Best form of Government, ib.—90. Hereditary Succession, ib.—91. Turbulence of the former Polish Diet, 279,—92. Elements of the British Constitution, ib.—93. Pretended Origin

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of Parliament, 280.—94. Miniature and other Republics, 281. —95. Evils produced by Standing Armies, 282.—96. Royal Domains, ib.—97. Faults of Elective Power, 284.—98. Sacredness and Inviolability of the Person of the Sovereign, ib. —99. Royal Power limited by Laws, 286.—100. Liberty of the Press, 288.—101. Justice sacrificed to momentary Welfare, 289.—102. Means of Influence, ib.—103. Liberty of Opinion, ib.—104. Limits of the patience of a Nation, 290. —105. Fines for accidental words, ib.—106. Legitimacy of Insurrection, ib.—107. Non-appreciation of Public Opinion, 294.—108. Limits of Transgression, 295.—109. Tyrants govern by Fear, ib.—110. Functions of the Nobility in the State, 296.—111. Right of every Man to a share of Happiness, 299.—112. Landlords and Tenants, ib.—113. Justice invested in the Nobility, ib.—114. Knowledge of Judges and their privation of Property, 300.—115. Prerogative of the King, ib.—116. Opening and Dissolving of Parliament by the King, 301.—117. Degrees of Nobility in England, ib. —118. Ecclesiastical Power in the British Constitution, 302. —119. Occupations of the Nobility, 306.—120. Parliamentary Eloquence, 307.—121. Vide Notes 92 and 93, 311.— 122. Members of Society are not all alike, ib.—123. General Happiness, ib.—124. Does a monarch enjoy perfect Happiness? 312.—124a. Dignities of the State conferred on Children, 313.—125. Men are not all alike, ib.—126. Bombastical Eloquence, ib.—127. Men rising from common occupations to high dignities, ib.—127a. (p. 314.)—128. Despotism of the People the worst Tyranny, ib.—129. "Those are real Tyrants who consider their will as the only existing Law," ib.—130. The King and the People,, 315.— 131. Ultra-conservatives, ib.—132. "Every Countryman should work for himself," ib.—133. Law of Primogeniture, 316.—134. Vide note 114, ib.—135. Leagues may be considered as little States in the Realm, ib.—136. Reformation should be pursued by degrees, ib.—137. French Deputies under the last Government, ib.—138. Fertile Lands changed into Deserts, 317.—139. Alfred's Registration of Acres, ib.—140. Population of Alfred's Dominions, ib.— 141. Origin of Annual Parliamentary Sessions, ib.—142. Voluntary Gifts and Taxes, ib.—143. Assent to the Annual Budget, 319.—Legion of Officers for collecting Taxes, ib. —144. Right of levying Taxes vested in the House of Commons, 323.—145. Burden shaken from one to another, 324.—146. Revenue of the Church, 325.—147. Subjection of all Ranks to Taxes, ib.—148. Proportion of Taxes, ib.—

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149. Illusive Freedom, 326.—150. Foundation of the British Constitution, ib.—151. Reforms in Legislation, ib.—152. Obedience to the Laws, 327.—153. Men should moderate their desires, ib.—154. Punishments must be mild but inevitable, 328.—155. Public Appointments obtained by favour, ib.—156. Privy Council, ib.—157. Surveyance over Counsellors, 329.—258. Voice of the People, ib.—159. Use of the rejecting power of a King, 330.—160. Influence practised on Electors, ib.—161. Such an honest man, who supports with patience the loss of the esteem of his Party, exists even now, ib.—162. Do Representatives strive to increase their power? 351.—163. Mischief caused by the power of the People, ib.—164. Deputies and their Electors, ib.—165. Members of the Opposition, ib.—166. Recent Proposals made to Government, 332.—167. Majority and Minority, 333.—168. Reform of Representation, ib.—169. Happy situation of Great Britain, 336.—170. Question of Short or Long Parliaments, ib.—171 and 172. Representatives should be worthy of sitting at the Rudder of Government, 337.

THE SIXTH BOOK.

ALFRED AND HIS NAVIGATOR, 152.

NOTES, COMMENTARIES, ETC.

173. Othar's Voyages, 338.—174. Othar's success in obtaining Ships for his Voyages, ib.—175 and 176. Sociality in a State of Nature, ib.—177. Cruelty practised towards Children, ib.—178. Marriages and Filial Piety, 339.—179. Origin of Property, ib.—180. History of Five Robinson Crusoes, 341.—181. Infancy of Man, ib.—182. Examples of worthy Landowners, 342.

CONCLUSION.

NOTES, COMMENTARIES, ETC.

183. Man in a State of Nature, 344.—184. Moderate Monarchy, ib.

*** *The Engravings on the Title, and on the Introduction require no explanation. The embossed figure on the Cover, taken from the Cottonian Library, represents, according to Strutt's "Manners and Customs of the Ancient Britons," an Anglo-Saxon King, of the ninth century, a sketch of which was used, with some alteration in the face, which we do not, however, pretend to be an authentic copy of Alfred. The face of Alfred's jewel is represented on the reverse of the Cover, the other side being given in an engraving in p.* 186.

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LIST OF AUTHORS

CONSULTED BY THE COMPILER.

Asser.

Bacon.

Bastiat.

Blackstone.

Bolingbroke.

Burke (Edmund)

De Lolme.

Ethelwolfe's Chronicle.

Flower (Benjamin.)

Giles (the Rev. Dr.)

Grotius.

Hugo (Victor.)

Hume.

Kang-he's (Emperor's "Sacred Edict.")

King.

Lappenberg.

Littleton.

Locke.

Lovelace (Earl of.)

Malmesbury (William of.)

Montesquieu.

Mortimer (Sir Thomas.)

Muller (J. Von.)

Potter.

Schomberg.

Spelman (John.)

Turner.

Voltaire.

Wade.

Wolfe.

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ERRATA.

Page 235 line 26—For *Geni* read *Genius*.

„ 307 „ 10—For *perrot-footmen* read *parrot-footmen*.

„ 313 „ 32—For *by the president* read *by one of the chiefs*.

„ 316 „ 3—For *oté* read *oter*.

„ 319 „ 5—For *are well* read *is well*.

„ 335 „ 33—For *life time* read *for a life time*.

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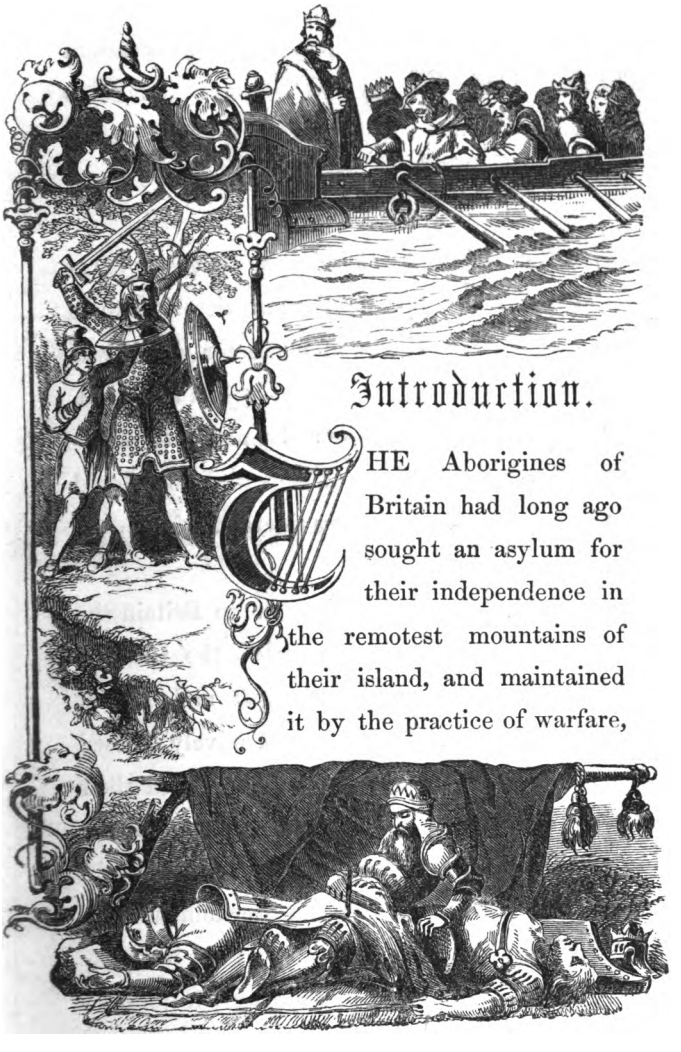

Introduction.

THE Aborigines of Britain had long ago sought an asylum for their independence in the remotest mountains of their island, and maintained it by the practice of warfare,

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for which the Scots gave them perpetual occasion. The Hebrides were divided between the Scots and the Hibernians, as the island of the Ægæan Sea had been shared by the Greeks and Persians.

The first Belgic Britons in the southern parts of the island lost, by the Roman victories, their liberty, and the strength of character which was necessary to restore it. Pressed by sea and land, they found themselves under the necessity of inviting a tribe of Saxons, at that time considered as a nation of formidable navigators.

The English brought with them to Britain the simple and barbarous manners of the German tribes. The followers of Hengist and Horsa, and the other hordes who successively passed over and occupied the country, maintained their national character with the greater purity, as the insular situation of England prevented intercourse with foreigners. They were animated by a love of their country and a spirit of independence, which were cherished during six hundred

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years by the weakness of monarchy, or by impediments arising from the various states of public opinion, and the inclination of the nobility and the popular assemblies, which controlled the ambition of the kings. From this long contest there arose, at length, a constitution, which imparted life and vigour to the state, and which will continue to unite the various advantages of all the forms of government, and to avoid their evils, *until the commercial spirit shall finally give rise to habits of thinking, incompatible with the self-devotion of patriotism.*

For the rest, England was divided into seven kingdoms, of which the subjects were chiefly Saxons, or those Britons whom their circumstances had not enabled to emigrate. The remainder of the Britons sought refuge in the mountains of Wales, or crossed the sea, to share the fate of Armorica, to which country they imparted the name of their native land. England, properly so called, was, long before the time of Alfred, divided into hundreds and coun-

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ties. Every division had its head, who was responsible to his superior, and all were subject to the king. Forty names of such counties serve still for the division of the country; but there are larger cities which are within the jurisdiction of no county, and districts which give the tenths not to any bishop, but to the king; those towns having been built since the division into counties took place, and such districts having been cultivated since the revenues of the church were allotted. *The institutions of England are in this respect peculiar, that the people have so much reverence for antiquity, as rather to bear with imperfections than to violate the venerable form of the political fabric. Liberty, which is founded on custom and precedent, does not admit of innovations.*

Every district elected its magistrate, so that, even at that early period, the ambitious had no way of obtaining their gratification but by seeking to gain, through popular manners, the affections of the people. Laws were enacted by the

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king, in the council of the nobles and wise men. The latter long retained the impression of the wisdom of ancient Rome, a certain predilection for knowledge, as if the muses had ever sought the land of freedom. This national council was assembled in a regular manner twice every year. Free men held that place in it, which in the records is distinguished by the name of Commons. The judgments that were given during these times became the model and foundation of the common law, the traditional remains of original customs and rights, as declared in every case by the voice of twelve men of the same rank with the accused. These decisions, handed down from antiquity, formed the favourite law of the country, the foundation of England's liberty, as it had descended from the earliest ages. Those institutions which had not their origin in the primitive manner of the people, were introduced in latter times by violence and craft.

How the constitution, manners, and religion of a people may undergo frequent alterations, while

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through all such vicissitudes the love of freedom may still remain inherent in them, and display proofs of its influence on every occasion; how this general sentiment, exalted by all private interests, may yet in no particular give rise to any excess, but may produce an equilibrium of power in the whole fabric of the state; how this spirit of independence may find the way of limiting the power of the king, by means of a parliament, and the authority of the latter, by means of the king, and the influence of one house by that of the other; and how these strong and multifarious bonds of liberty may give to all classes of the people a lofty elevation of character; all these great and splendid problems find their solution in the history of the English nation. When we observe the old Albiones in the mountains of Caledonia, the Britons in Wales, and the English themselves all animated with the same spirit, we are obliged to conjecture the existence of some permanent, ever-operative cause, powerful enough to overcome the original characters which these nations brought with them

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from foreign realms. As the laws of the Chinese, Indians, and Egyptians, resisted the effect of repeated vicissitudes over a very lengthened period; and the institutions of Lycurgus maintained their relation to the rugged feet of the Taÿgetus;—the same as the Romans and Carthaginians acquired, from local circumstances, those characters which have excited the admiration of posterity; the manners of the Germans remained permanent on their native soil, underwent in Spain a complete reverse, and gave way in France to a more sprightly character; so we may contemplate the British isles, as destined by nature to become the land of freedom. Finer fruits are the gifts of a warmer climate; but colder regions bring forth hardier bodies; the former enervates and renders its people effeminate; the latter enables them to bear even servility with patience; the climate of England holds the enviable mean, and moderation is the character of all its institutions.

The whole northern region of the world was

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as yet unknown. Scarcely does a faint glimmering break forth by degrees more like the polar lights than the splendour of day. Scandinavia, Russia, Sarmatia, and the land of the Gepidi, to the confines of the eastern empire, were still enveloped in darkness; but England was destined to become the central point of the civilized south and the rude north; and she it was who, in later years, through the mighty lever of navigation and commerce, was to propagate universal civilization.

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THE FIRST BOOK.

ALFRED THE HERO.[2]

THE powerful Egbert governed no more; Ethelwulf, his son, inherited his crown—but neither his genius nor his courage; and his eldest son, Ethelwald, extorted from him half his realm, but was himself only for a short time possessor of the vacant throne. Under his reign began the misfortunes of England.

The inhabitants of England were no more the old warriors of Saxony; for, under the milder climate of England, their manners and customs had become softened; the contempt of death, and the thirst for victory and conquest, had been eradicated by the superior power of the priests. Kings were seen visiting, and coming from afar, to pray at the altars of the holy monks. Of the priests they implored victories, which their ancestors had

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expected solely by the power of their swords. Already had they visited Rome as the source of salvation. Already had the whole realm been subjected to a tax, by which they purchased the protection of the chief bishop. They wished to enjoy in peace the fruits of the country their ancestors had acquired at the price of their blood. War was now considered by the Anglo-Saxons as a duty to which they were obliged to recur, but no longer as the beloved exercise of their valour.

Farther north, in the more severe climate of Scandinavia, the rude old customs were preserved. That country was inhabited by a race of people whose only fear was a woundless death, and who awaited the reward of their courage in eternity, believing the effusion of their own blood to be the only means of obtaining the favour of Odin. Those nations then inhabited the remote regions, where the Romans had never brought their arts or their emollient manners. They considered the peaceful inhabitants of southern Europe as a booty purposely created by nature for them, as the pigeon is for the sparrow-hawk.

The Northmen,[3] the inhabitants of the shores of the extensive Scandinavia, cruized in light

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vessels on all the seas, landed from the rivers, surprised the defenceless villages and the unprotected towns, plundered the inhabitants of their wealth, and found a fierce pleasure in destruction and in the murder of the vanquished. They owned no other virtue than the courage of the warrior; the modesty of the peaceful clergy seemed to them a base neglect of the sole duty by which man can be honoured. They despised science as they despised the distaff, considering them merely as the occupation of cowardly natures. When they had devastated a country, when all that surrounded their camp was smoking, and the fruits of the assiduity of the innocent countrymen had been consumed, they returned to their ships, and sought another country, which had not yet felt the effects of their blood-thirsty swords and destructive torches. Thus the savages carried with them death and calamity throughout the world, and the land which bore their footsteps was doomed to misfortune. Tired of killing, and loaded with the booty of the industrious, they returned to their harbours, sung of their feats to the beauties of the country, and enjoyed the general veneration of the inhabitants. The chiefs of the barbarians often carried off some handsome woman, taking her to his rustic castle, where no tears could save her innocence, and all hope was lost of ever again

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breathing the milder air of her country, or hearing the sweet voices of her parents.

Brought up in armour and amidst combats, these warriors knew no other art than the glorious one of war. They feared no wounds, and looked upon death as the passage to the palaces of the gods. They never considered the numbers of their enemies, and singly attacked whole armies. The gallant Ragnar sung his funeral hymns with gnawing snakes in his bosom. This courage was accompanied by a strength acquired by continual exercise, and by the most perfect knowledge of the use of their weapons. In their contempt of death they surpassed all other European nations, and their arrival spread terror over the whole realm; the hopeless inhabitants left their homes and fled to the fortified towns, where walls and towers opposed for a while the progress of the enemies, who were not in possession of implements to break down these fortifications.

The weak Carlovingians could not resist the rushing torrent of the Northmen, and purchased at the price of their silver an uncertain peace. The Scandinavians acknowledged no governor, every chieftain plundered on his own account. When one of the bands, bearing the ransom of the terrified

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inhabitants, returned home, the next entered with the same fury, and took the lives of the miserable men, which had been purchased of the former. Resistance and submission were alike dangerous; for, to those inexperienced in war, the first was inevitable destruction, and the latter only postponed for some weeks their complete ruin.

It was under the reign of Ethelbert, brother of Ethelwulf, that Hubba and Hinguar, the sons of Ragnar Lodobroch, forced their way into England. They surprised York, then already a large town. The princes of the country advanced to their encounter with a poorly armed multitude of men, but the war-like Scandinavians defeated the enervated Saxons. They killed a part of the nobility, and extorted from the vanquished hard conditions and shameful contributions. They also soon attacked the eastern part of the island: Edmund, Prince of the East-Saxons, was likewise defeated, and made a prisoner. The barbarians killed him, and overran the whole country with their bloody weapons.[4]

Another Saxon army fortified themselves at Reading,[5] not far from London, then only a town of middling class. Ethelred, King of the Anglo-Saxons, son and successor to Ethelwulf, at-

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tacked the intrenched Northmen with more courage than fortune, being repulsed with a great loss of men. At Ashdune, not far from Reading, the armies again met; the Anglo-Saxons were divided into two camps, one of which was under the command of the king himself, and the other under that of his younger brother, the active Alfred, who then made his first essay against the enemies of his country. Alfred, the favourite of his father Ethelwulf, and the youngest of his sons, had received of nature gifts seldom combined in one individual. An agreeable exterior and engaging manner won all hearts to him. He was sent by his father to Rome, then the seat of that little learning which the destructive wars of the Northmen in Europe had not buried in oblivion. The young prince was instructed in arts nearly forgotten in England, and even acquired ecclesiastical dignities, for Leo IV. bishop of Rome, anticipated, from a secret feeling, the future grandeur of the noble youth, and therefore anointed him as king, although three elder brothers existed between him and the throne.[6]

In England Alfred was brought up in the practice of the only exercises then considered noble, hunting, and the art of falconry. He was accustomed to support the inconveniences of a labori-

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ous life, as well as the sufferings of hunger, heat, and fatigue. He was eighteen years old, when his brother, Ethelred, thought him able to command an army; but not being acquainted with the noble qualities of the blooming young prince, he believed it necessary to induce the youth, by promises of great rewards, to assist him in the threatening circumstances in which England was placed. He therefore promised him half the lands he should subdue. Ethelred afterwards acted unfairly towards the noble Alfred; he not only withheld that part of the realm intended by his father as his hereditary share, but likewise that which he had himself promised him; but the love of his country suppressed in Alfred all feelings of resentment, and he zealously served his unjust brother in the most dangerous campaigns.

Alfred was really virtuous, and an ardent desire to serve his country inflamed his courage. The Northmen advanced to meet him in the field, and compelled him with his weakened and inexperienced army to battle. Ethelred was, during that time, praying in his tent, and neither the entreaties of his Anglo-Saxons, nor the sounds of the challenging trumpets, could induce him to abridge the ceremony by which he hoped to obtain the Divine

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assistance. While Ethelred delayed, Alfred was obliged to venture the dangers of a battle, and marched in an open plain against the more numerous and dreaded Northmen. His bravery and example excited the most irresolute soldiers to a firm resistance. Their bows of yew-tree, from which flew iron darts, (a system which, some centuries after, gave the English a preponderance over the most warlike knights in Europe,) held for a long time the issue of the battle undecided. They slayed a great number of the half-naked Northmen, whose weapons were only dangerous in close combat, but the brave Northmen remained undaunted; wrath inflamed their courage; they forced themselves into the Saxon ranks, whose massive weapons were no longer useful, and compelled them to retreat, though not to disperse. The sight and example of the young hero kept them under their standard; but they were surrounded by their overpowering enemies, and despair replaced courage, just as Ethelred at last approached. Too much time had he devoted to piety in moments so precious for the safety of his people. His army, which had not suffered at all, perceived the near destruction of their brethren, and rushed with more energy to their rescue than the king could hope. One part of them firmly met one wing of the Northmen,

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another fell on the flanks of the combatting enemy, who, enclosed between the two Saxon armies, became the victims of Alfred's vengeance. The wing which still resisted, on beholding the loss of the other, retreated. The victors pursued the Northmen over the whole environs, until night sheltered the remainder. Thousands lay scattered over the field, and the earth eagerly drank the blood of its furious enemies.[7]

But the north was too fertile in wandering legions, and the courage of its inhabitants too great for one defeat, to prevent them from again attemping the booty they had so often found in England. After a few weeks, their army was reinforced by numerous ships from Scandinavia. They therefore again advanced upon the two Saxon princes. A battle was fought near Merton, in the county of Wilts, in which Ethelred was wounded, and the Saxons forced to have recourse to flight. The greater practice in war, and the riveted contempt of death, gave the Northmen a preponderance, which Alfred's bravery was unable to resist. Ethelred died of his wounds, leaving the realm in a situation which must have paralyzed every desire of possessing the vacant throne. The victorious Northmen occupied the heart of the

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country, the Saxons were exhausted from their repeated defeats, and more disheartened by their hopelessness than from the reduced number of their soldiers. A king of this people, exposed to the greatest dangers, could foresee nothing but doubtful battles, probable defeats, humiliation, and wounds.

Alfred was young, but his stability suppressed, even in the most passionate periods of his life, the emotion of lust. He was now, excepting a child, the only possessor of the noble blood, which, from the dignified Woden to the victorious Egbert, reigned uninterruptedly over the Saxons. Ethelred had already promised him the succession to the throne, while he deprived him of the estates which were his hereditary share. Alfred fought for his people, and was victorious; and even when defeated, his courage and prudence were irreproachable. The whole country of the Saxons looked up to him, hoping only to be saved from the threatened ruin by his virtues; but the prudent youth long declined assenting to the pressing nobility, and the soliciting clergy. At last he unwillingly complied with their request, and consented to ascend the throne at Winchester, which had so often been shaken by the conquering barbarians.

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Not a month had elapsed before Alfred was obliged to give a general battle at Wilton;[8] he would have preferred to exercise his people previously to war, by little skirmishes, to teach them to look boldly into the furious faces of the Northmen, but the murders of the barbarians, and the fires spread by them over the whole country, forced him to submit to uncertain chance, and to oppose the enemy with a limited force. Long did the Saxons contend with equal success against the Northmen, till the sun stood at the meridian; the wise directions of the king seemed to have given him the victory. The Northmen gave way—they fled not, but retreated. The Saxons imprudently followed them; many dispersed themselves from the desire of booty, and pressed the enemy to a rising ground, from which they could overlook the thin legions of the Saxons. The brave Northmen also preserved their courage in defeats, they hastened back and fell upon the Saxons, who were sure of the victory, and wrested from them the honour of the day. Night withdrew them from the swords of the Northmen, and very few fell, but the victory was lost, and the courage of the Saxons again depressed.

Nevertheless the Northmen purchased the victory with so much blood, and the warlike capacity

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of Alfred had awakened in them such veneration, that they concluded a treaty with him, leaving the kingdom of the West-Saxons, and turned their weapons towards other parts of the island, over which Gurrhead, Prince of Middlesex, reigned. They devastated his dominions, forced him to several battles, and after his death, compelled his realm to submit to their power. The kingdoms of the East-Saxons and of Northumberland were laid in ruins, and the few fortified places were in possession of the Scandinavians. Guthrum and Amund with new legions soon attacked the watchful King Alfred, who alone upheld the liberty of the West-Saxons; but the prudent king compelled the Northmen to withdraw from his country, and by an oath to their divinities, for ever to leave his dominions; the perjurers, however, soon after invaded the royal establishment for rearing horses, robbed them, and captured Exeter.

The king represented to his hopeless and fatigued Saxons, that as neither peace nor oaths could bind the barbarians, there was no other remedy than to trust to themselves and their own courage. Since there was no other means for their safety left, despair should strengthen their arms; for it would be more glorious to die sword in hand, than to be murdered and robbed, like flying game, without

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resistance. Encouraged by these representations, the Saxons grasped their weapons and opposed themselves to the Northmen. Seven times in one year was Alfred obliged to combat these robbers; and the most noble blood of the Saxons flowed like streams on the fields. But the Northmen lost likewise half their legions, and at last agreed to the former conditions—to leave the kingdom of the West-Saxons, and never to bring any new legions from the north to Alfred's realm.

The victorious Rollo, the ancestor of the Norman kings, for whom Providence destined Alfred's throne, kept true to that treaty: he left England, and turned his weapons against Neustria, which he appropriated to himself, and over which country his grandsons reigned with glory and renown.

As nothing could escape Alfred's judgment, he found it useless to force the Northmen to treaties so long as the open sea was at their command. Their fierce avidity and blood-thirsty desire for fame did not allow them to practise any arts, and to them life was not endurable unless they could hear the clash of weapons, and were aroused by hopes of fresh victories. Alfred perceived what the former kings of Saxony did not, that England had no other enemies to fear than those who

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could attack her by sea. He accordingly ordered vessels[9] to be built in all the harbours, and took into his pay, as volunteers, skilful sailors, selected from the fishermen. He equipped his ships with soldiers, and stationed them at the mouths of the rivers, where the Scandinavians usually disembarked. The Saxons then came vigorous and well-armed from their harbours, while the robbers who arrived from Scandinavia were fatigued and weakened by the long voyage necessary to reach England. The Saxons, who were then superior to the Northmen, vanquished two of their squadrons, sunk most of their vessels, and compelled the remainder to fly to their northern regions. Alfred hastened to reach Exeter by land, surrounded the Northmen, who were already on horseback, and forced them to give hostages, and leave the whole country of the West-Saxons.[10] Very few of the Northmen kept their promise, for the greater number could only find their subsistence in plunder. They again invaded Alfred's dominions, surprised Chippenham, the strongest fortified castle of the pressed Saxons, and carried the consuming fire and bloody sword to all corners of the realm.[11]

Fatigued with long wars and repeated defeats, and weakened by their own victories, the Saxons at last lost all hope of preservation. They dis-

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persed themselves in the woods, in the wildernesses, in Wales, until then unmolested, and sought even among their enemies a security, which no resistance could procure them. The unarmed men bowed with despondency under the yoke, and submitted to their oppressors.

Alfred was abandoned by his people, and saw no means of rallying, or of again raising the spirits of the depressed soldiers. He had, therefore, no other alternative than to save himself, as with his ruin would fall all hopes of re-establishing the kingdom of the Saxons. He cast off the royal garments, arrayed himself in the coarse clothes of the labourer, blackened his rosy cheeks with the juice of fruits, and sought shelter in the hut of an old cowherd, who had been employed by his forefathers; this faithful servant concealed the dignity of his master even from his own wife, who treated the unknown monarch with an unbecoming rudeness,[12] in which Alfred found his security. A whole year the young king remained thus concealed, but his active nature was not idle during that time of oppression.

The Northmen having erected a scattered camp in the marshy island of Athelney,[13] between two rivers, in the county of Somerset, considered them-

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selves perfectly secure in the elder bushes growing among the moors, from which natural fortifications they directed their excursions into the unfortunate kingdom of the West-Saxons; and concealed in those impenetrable deserts, captured booties from the tormented English. Alfred often fell, with a few Saxons, or with some armed herdsmen, upon the Danish camp. He slayed single detachments of robbers, and prepared the great act of vengeance he meditated on the barbarians. He often retook from them the cattle they had stolen, and divided them amongst the volunteers who assisted him to annoy the enemies of the country. The single and abandoned king was to the Northmen a whole army, which slew them by hundreds, and yet remained invisible. These petty victories spread his shepherd's name abroad, and Wulf became a dreaded name.

Alfred awaited with pain and impatience the time when he hoped to free his people from the oppression under which they languished. His faithful host was poor, and the wandering tribes of Danes had already robbed him of his cattle; he was therefore obliged to share his frugal bread with Alfred, and even that at times failed from unexpected accidents. One day there remained but one loaf for Alfred and his host, when a tra-

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veller entered the hut in which Alfred was alone, saying, "I am starving." Alfred could not resist such an appeal, and shared his last loaf with the unfortunate man; trusting for his future subsistence to that Providence which nourishes the ravens. He fell asleep in his solitude, and tradition says, that in the soft slumber which only attends the virtuous, a superior being appeared to him and spoke thus: "Thy misfortunes are at an end, King of the Saxons, thy throne now awaits thee; be in prosperity what thou hast been in misery." Alfred heard these words, and after a few hours awoke with the dawn of hope. The shepherd had been fortunate in fishing, and the herdsmen had found one of their strayed sheep. But more important news called him to great undertakings. Odun, Earl of Devon, had fortified himself, and retired to Kinwith Castle, where a great number of dispersed Saxons had assembled under his banner. Hubba and Hinguar had just returned from Wales, with booty captured from the Saxons, whom they had pursued thither; and hoped to force Kinwith with little resistance, there remaining but little provision to the besieged garrison. They accordingly surrounded the castle, and cut off the water, thinking thereby to compel them to surrender.

Alfred's heart burned at the sufferings of his

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people. He left Athelney, and repaired, disguised as a minstrel, to the encampment of the Danes. He sang to the lute old war-songs; the Northmen listened to him with eagerness, and led him to the tent of their commander. The king remained two days in the enemys' camp, and acquired a perfect knowledge of the whole situation of their army. He observed their carelessness, and their disdain of the Saxons whom they had so often vanquished. He summoned, by faithful messengers, his dispersed Saxons from the counties of Wilts, Hants, and Somerset, assembled them in the forest of Selwood, and at Egbert's stone united them under his standard.

Alfred presented himself before them arrayed in royal garments, and in all the glitter of a conqueror who would lead them, full of hope, against the enemy. He addressed them in a speech, which excited them to a bold attack:—"You have," said he, "the choice of being killed by the barbarians, leaving them your wives as victims, your children as slaves, and your country groaning under the heaviest of yokes; or to free your country, your children, your wives, and yourselves, by the danger of one day. Do not fear the martial courage and experience of your enemies: I have seen them—seen them as closely as possible, and I can assure

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you they are not prepared for battle. They expect no enemy, and are perfectly ripe for a defeat; before the careless are awake, your swords will be in their bosoms."

The whole Saxon army clashed their shields, and a general shout rose to the skies: Alfred took care not to let such enthusiasm abate, and employed the whole night in approaching the Danes. At dawn of day, as the fires of the enemy expired, and most of them had sunk fast asleep, Alfred and his army rushed into the unguarded camp.

Just at that time Odun[14] sallied forth from Kinwith Castle with his garrison, whom despair had inflamed with a contempt for death. The warlike Northmen were beaten without resistance, and the embroidered raven, worked by the three sisters of Hubba, the general standard of the Scandinavians, on whose magic power, according to the superstitious notions of the Northmen, depended the victory, fell into the hands of Alfred.[15] A few Danes only escaped in their vessels. The greater part of the defeated army found a secure position, which, however, only delayed their destruction for a few days. Alfred surrounded the flying Northmen with his victorious army; and in the second

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week hunger and cold forced the disheartened brigands to surrender themselves to the king, in whose pity alone they still hoped for mercy. Alfred, satisfied with the humility of these dreaded warriors, offered them very moderate conditions of peace; Guthrum, the only commander who had escaped death, and thirty of the noblest warriors accepted baptism; Alfred himself gave the northern prince the name of Athelstan, and distributed among his new converts rich presents, Guthrum obtaining for his share the kingdoms of the East Saxons and Northumberland, in feudal possession.

Nations only gradually acquire a perfect knowledge of truth: long do they remain barbarians, and their wishes, like those of animals, are encompassed within the limits of necessity; but at last manners and arts begin to dawn, slowly the light increases, and noon succeeds to night, through twilight and the cooler morning hours.

Alfred forced the Northmen to baptize, and his object in doing so was of the best. By the ties of religion, he hoped to obtain of the wild warriors adherence to their promises, and to open to them the path by which they could escape eternal perdition: but the honest king perceived not, and the mundane priests knew not, that sprinkled water

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alone cannot make Christians—that the fear of the sword of a conqueror cannot produce conviction, and that the dignity of baptism, the sign of incorporation in the society of the faithful, is profaned in a punishable manner, when urged upon individuals who do not acknowledge the truth and spirit of the action, and whose will does not obey the duties of religion.

No faithfulness to the king was observed by either Guthrum or his warriors, and it was necessary to attack them anew; for amongst the Saxon priests, none could be found possessed of sufficient ardour or wisdom to convert so great a mass of warriors, hardened by robbery and bloodshed. The solemn baptism of the formidable Northmen attracted the Saxon nobility to Weadmore. Alfred stepped himself to the altar and pronounced the name Guthrum should bear as a Christian, promising, for the converted, faithfulness to the belief which he accepted.

The King of the Saxons never neglected the welfare of his people; he projected the laws which should in future govern the Northmen, who settled themselves in the kingdom of the East-Saxons and Northumberland, which were signed by Guthrum. The latter directed himself to the territory ap-

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pointed to him, and the Northmen who would not engage themselves to the Christian faith, shipped over to France, and there destroyed the badly defended provinces; but avoided beginning a new war with the Saxons, over whom they could not hope to obtain any advantage.

Alfred continued his efforts to form a navy, which would enable him to keep off the foreign robbers from his country; for it was not unknown to him that every bay in the northern regions issued armed vessels with freebooters, who considered every property that could not resist their weapons as their own. Alfred vanquished in the next year a northern fleet, sunk the largest vessels, and compelled the remainder to fly to the other shores, where the weak Carlovingians reigned powerless and without consideration, and left their people a prey to foreigners. Nevertheless another northern army reached near the Thames, and besieged Rochester, but the vigilant Alfred soon came to its assistance, when the Northmen fled without venturing a battle, and their plunder fell into the hands of the Saxons. Another squadron was attacked by Alfred at the mouth of the Stour;[16] he burned a part of the ships, and obliged the remainder to a treaty, which was again broken by the treacherous Northmen as soon as

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the presence of the king no longer restrained them.

Alfred immediately afterwards rebuilt and fortified the destroyed city of London, and to him this immense town owes its rise.[17] The prudent prince likewise fortified many other towns, foreseeing that the northern robbers could not so easily ruin his subjects if those towns were protected by walls and towers, as they did in the defenceless villages, before any assistance could arrive; but another still more important foresight occupied the king.

A storm awaited him, which he averted by his wisdom and prudence. Arnulf had united the whole power of his realm with the Franks, and forced the Northmen to leave the Seine, after they had besieged the populous island of Paris without success. Three hundred vessels filled with these martial robbers surprised Appledore, near the port of Rye, and fortified themselves at Beamfleet.[18] Many of the Scandinavians, who had sworn allegiance to Alfred, took weapons, and united themselves, to acquire booty, with the newly-arrived Northmen. Alfred hastened forward to the assistance of the distressed East-Saxons, and the citizens of repopulated London joined him. The walls of

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Beamfleet were scaled, and the wife and children of Hastings, the Northern commander, fell, with all their booty, into the hands of the Saxons. Alfred acted with his usual dignity, and expressed himself in these generous words, "I carry no war with women;" and sent back to the astonished Hastings his spouse, with all the other wives of the Northmen. But even this noble action made no impression on the barbarians; they robbed and destroyed in England from the Thames to mountainous Wales, and fortified themselves a second time at Buntington, in Shropshire. The starving Northmen were, however, forced to abandon the castle, from which all provisions had been cut off, and hastened to the Thames. They took their ships to the little river Lea,[19] where it flows into the noble Thames, surrounded them with bulwarks, and in that state awaited the watchful Alfred.

King Alfred regarded these fortifications as insurmountable; but, on an occasion of reconnoitring the enemy's camp on horseback, a scheme occurred to him, which was once executed by Cyrus; he drained off, by his army, the water from the Lea river, and the northern ships were wrecked on the shallow banks. The muddy valley was changed into a fertile meadow, and the distressed Scandinavians were forced to leave their

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fortified encampment. Many of them were annihilated by the swords of the Saxons, and the remainder found ships in the country of the East Saxons, wherewith they tried to injure the British by sea; but even on this element the prudent Alfred was too powerful; and being informed that the vessels of the Normans were very small and badly manned, he built larger ones, and armed them with a great number of mariners. The boats of the Northmen could not resist the superiority of the Saxon ships-of-war; many of them were shoaled, others were taken; and they avoided, during Alfred's life-time, to approach the island, where the wisdom of the king was constantly watching over his people.

Wearied at seeing his kindness thus abused, Alfred invested two Saxon earls with the government of Northumberland and of the country of the East Saxons, and by these means withdrew every influence from the Scandinavians who had settled in England. The Princes of Wales, whom the great Egbert had been unable to subdue, were forced to throw themselves on the mercy of Alfred, and seek his protection. He was created the general king of the south of Britain, which, a long time afterwards, assumed the name of England. His power was unlimited, because it

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was founded on the esteem and love of his people.[20]

Alfred's fame also spread beyond the sea. Victorious in war, generous to the vanquished, and a father to his people, he enjoyed the admiration of his times. The Saxons, who had escaped from their oppressed country, and dispersed themselves through various parts of Europe, reassembled under the protection of a beloved king. The Northmen, who were still in possession of some parts of the British islands, willingly submitted to his just laws. The earth, which had long lain uncultivated and waste, was soon covered with grain and fruits. Peace and abundance were spread over the impoverished land.

Godwin, a Saxon nobleman, being a handsome youth, had been many years previously carried away by northern pirates and taken to Scandinavia. He gained, by his faithfulness and bravery, the favour of his robbers, and finally, as the Northmen ceased to attack England, his liberty. After having travelled over a great part of the island, he arrived at Winchester, and was presented to the king.

The affable king heard with patient interest the narrative of the sufferings which the noble Saxon

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had endured in his bondage, and Godwin closed his tale with a speech, in which he bore testimony to the wisdom of the king. "Liberty," said he, "has been doubly agreeable to me, since I have found my country so fortunately changed. When I was carried away, most of the towns of England were lying in ashes; the unhappy inhabitants were eagerly seeking either a hidden corner of the rocks, an impassable bog, or a cavern more fitted for beasts than for men, to conceal themselves from the fury of the vanquishing robbers. The deserted fields were covered with thistles. The ornaments of gardens were unknown, and nowhere were the shouts of merry harvest heard. Fear and despair reigned on the alarmed countenances of the flying people. The schools in which I was taught the sciences had been burnt down, and the hands, used to work, were forced to repose. The maxims of wisdom were not heard anywhere, and even the worship of the Almighty could only take place clandestinely, for the fury of the infidels pursued with blood-thirsty hatred the exhortations of the servants of God. We neglected the only consolation which might support us in this state of oppression.

"Extreme is the difference in the state of England at present; towns are rising from ruins in

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redoubled magnificence; the places for the reunion of Christians have again attained the dignity which the service of God required; the schools are filled with learned men, and the youth of the realm are trained to wisdom and virtue; the fields are loaded with the richest seed, the voice of the joyful countryman animates his labour, and resounds as he assembles the gifts of the earth. The desert bogs are changed into gay meadows; the residence of desolation is covered with herds, which nourish the countryman with their abundance. The former conquerers of the Saxons reside now in caverns or ruins, and in heaps of unhewn stone; their fields, which they neglected to cultivate, are barren, and refuse their gifts. There remains no means for their indolence than to purchase with their blood the subsistence which they do not obtain by their labour. What is the cause of this vast difference between the Saxons and themselves? between England and Scandinavia? It is Alfred! a single man has changed the face of the earth, and made of a desert a paradise."[21]

With all his modesty Alfred could not help expressing the sincere pleasure he felt at the narration of these truths; his heart was secretly moved, and he promised himself to watch with even greater zeal over the future happiness of his Saxons.

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THE SECOND BOOK.

ALFRED'S LOVE.

SERIOUS history gives us no account of Alfred's love.[22] Tradition alone has preserved its memory in an ancient song, entitled "Edgar and Emma," which, even in our times, awaken the sentiments which it then did in the Saxons. This old tradition contains nothing injurious to the noble prince. We will therefore not omit it.

Alfred was still concealed at his father's herdsman's, and known in the country by the name of Wulf. He had disguised his features so skilfully that even his nobles did not recognize him. From the swamps of Athelney he often fell (with some other Saxons who had fled like himself) upon his enemies the Northmen, and avenged the sufferings which his people endured, thus providing them with provisions and arms. But the moment they

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were closely pressed, they dispersed themselves in the lurking places known to every Saxon, and vanished from the sight of the Northmen.

Wulf often fought with success, but was at length encircled by a legion of enemies, and had to oppose a superior force. He retired to a small spot nearly surrounded by water, which only allowed his opponents a narrow passage, whereby he could with a few men keep off their multitudes. He slew many a bold robber with his cross-bow, which was at that time a new invention, and to which the English of later times are indebted for many victories. At last a northern warrior succeeded in wounding the unknown king with his spear. The loss of blood deprived him of his power, and in the darkness of night, which protected the Saxons, his companions were obliged to bear him away from the danger into a neighbouring castle, within which Ethelred, a Saxon earl, had enclosed himself with a plentiful supply of provisions, and many Saxons who had likewise taken refuge there.

The Northmen, who dreaded both the valour of the earl, and the strength of his walls, durst not attack it. The sorrowful Saxons arrived at night before the castle gates, and requested admission:—"Wulf," said they, "the dread of the rob-

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bers, is wounded." The name of this avenger of the Saxons was known to every friend of the country. The gates opened for him, and Ethelred received him personally as a hero, although he knew nothing of his origin. According to the old customs of the honest Germanians, Elswitha, a maiden of the greatest beauty and most elevated character, accompanied her noble father. Wulf was borne, fainting, into the hall; a deadly paleness lay over his countenance. His arms, whose strength the Northmen had so often felt, now hung powerless by his couch. Elswitha had observed the wound, and dressed it herself. He was revived by strengthening cordials, and then given over to rest.

Ethelred and his lovely daughter daily visited the suffering warrior. His wound required the greatest attention, and Elswitha often bound it with her own delicate hands. On such occasions Wulf would open his eyes, and observe the tender exertions of the noble maiden. Her youth, her beauty, and her kind compassion for his misfortunes, moved the young king; and the long time his wound required to heal, allowed love to creep stealthily into his heart. He daily found new causes for admiring her. Her soft voice, her candid innocence, her lovely features, and her becoming

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manners, so completely fascinated him, that he felt he could never leave her without being very unhappy.

The noble Ethelred was acquainted with the virtues of his daughter. Business often called him suddenly from the castle; and without suspicion he left the beautiful maiden alone with the king, who was slowly recovering. Alfred's virtues found no cause of alarm in his pure love. He perceived no obstacle to prevent him from uniting himself with the countess, whom, however, he wished to test before taking her as his companion for life.

Alfred was personally unknown to all his Saxons. They only heard of him by his actions. He continued to conceal his birth, and was believed by his followers to be a common Saxon warrior, brought up in arms. In spite of this abasement he endeavoured to please the maiden. She soon discovered sufficient signs of the love of the unknown; the innocent proofs of his esteem and his admiration, made him involuntarily betray marks of his superior education, which Elswitha could not harmonize with his coarse garments and appearance. Alfred could not conceal the manners of high life. He was the best poet among the Saxons, of whom none could write in their language with such ele-

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gance as himself. He sometimes entertained the lady with short poems, and sometimes with tales, which so charmed her that she was often obliged to prolong the time of her presence.

Alfred related to her under assumed names, his voyages and wars, and told her that he had been a witness of the great battles, where in reality he had been the commander. He described in vivid pictures the splendour of great Rome, the beauties of happy Italy, with its shrubs of myrtle, and its forests of laurel, and the ever-blooming islands of the Mediterranean. Of her own charms, of her personal attributes, he only spoke as a common servant,[23] who had not the courage to raise his eyes to the elevated princess, but who, nevertheless, felt her perfection. He disclosed his own sentiments in ballads which appeared old, but were only composed for herself, and only suitable to their mutual situation. When she blushed, and Alfred feared that she would break off the too bold conversation, he could turn it without restraint upon other topics, or respectful jokes. He accompanied her singing on his lute, which he played with perfection; and which greatly increased the touching power of his agreeable voice.

The countess was in the bloom of her youth,

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and, according to the customs of those times, was brought up in the paternal castle, where she had opportunities of seeing many hardy warriors, and vigorous knights; but Alfred's noble deportment, and the fascinating spirit of his conversation, had for her all the attraction of novelty. The king's features, partly disguised by artificial colour, could not be completely disfigured; and the nobleness of his soul shone through his bright eyes. The innocent beauty became imperceptibly pleased with this intercourse, soon also with the person of the unknown; and her heart was captured before she was aware that it had surrendered.

The impression which he made on the fair lady could not be concealed from the penetrating Alfred, and he ventured to let her perceive his love in more explicit words. Without a positive declaration, he sufficiently described the sentiments of his heart to be divined. Elswitha, without knowing how far she was ensnared, had no suspicions of herself. She became accustomed to return his looks with reciprocal glances; her voice assumed the confidential sweetness which unstained youth grants to them who are inspired with their first love. She had little secrets which Alfred alone should know; and accompanied him when he sang of love under imaginary names.

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The king's wound was now healed, and he found no pretence for remaining any longer in the castle of the earl. Besides, he was preparing himself for the enterprise which was to replace him on the throne of the Saxons, and the young man was already too wise to sacrifice to love the duty which he owed his people and his own dignity. But he could not tear himself from the charming bands of the fair Elswitha, without taking with him the certainty that his image alone occupied her heart. He allowed himself a dissimulation not in his character, but resolved that the short pain which he would cause the maiden should be recompensed by the most constant love.

Ethelred was on a journey to a tournament given by another noble, a trial for which Alfred's arm had not yet acquired sufficient strength. Ethelred left him in the castle, which stood on a hill, at the foot of which was a grotto, formed by the rocks, from which descended a cool spring. To this place Elswitha resorted for shelter from the glowing heat of the sun. "Wulf," said the affable maiden, "has not yet seen the noblest ornament of the castle," and she led him to the grotto. Alfred had never ventured the least intimacy which could have intimidated her virtue; and although he pleased her, and she could no

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longer conceal it, she only took him for a young warrior of ignoble birth, and to whom she would never abase herself, however agreeable his good qualities might be.

Alfred profited by the moment when he was alone with her, and solemnly said, "It is all over, I must leave this castle, where I have met with so much kindness; but I am ungrateful enough to wish that I had never been received in it." Elswitha seemed surprised at this discourse; but the dissembling king continued, "I cannot possibly conceal that I have seen the fair Elswitha too often, and that the recollection of her charms and her virtues will make me miserable for the remainder of my days." Modestly Elswitha blushed; the pride of her ancestors revolted at the declaration of a man she thought unworthy of her. But an inward feeling spoke for the unknown, and checked the agitation of her anger: "Wulf forgets," said she, hesitatingly, "that he is a wounded man, and that my father's castle received him only as a warrior who needed our assistance, and was not unworthy of it." "Wulf forgets not the dignity of Elswitha," said Alfred, interrupting her; "he knows best the value of the perfect lady whom he offends. But there are sentiments which no objections of reason can suppress, and no one has ever felt what I do

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for Elswitha; I can die, and have encountered death, but I cannot conceal how unhappy I should consider myself if Elswitha could disdain me."

"I know the merits of Wulf," modestly continued Elswitha, "my father honours in him a warrior who has shed his blood for the rescue of the Saxons. It is not disdain, if I must avoid conversations which cannot make any impression. It is not for me to abolish the difference which the wise have made between various classes of men: Wulf will find in his own rank a beauty, who can listen to his love, and reward it."

"Well! my sentence is pronounced," said Alfred, with a dissimulation in his features expressive of the deepest sorrow; "I unwillingly leave this castle, but Elswitha will not prevent me from bearing with me an unfortunate love; in the danger to which my rank leads me, she will not prevent her image from being present in my last moments, and her name from being my last word."

"But, Wulf," said the innocent maiden, quite terrified, "can a modest and deserving youth be so unreasonable as to require of a maiden concessions which she cannot grant, without being undeserving of him? Can he hope that Ethelred will approve

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of his love? Can he require of Elswitha to disobey her venerable father? Did I, at least, know to whom Wulf owes his birth, and how great the distance is between himself and Elswitha?"

"Wulf," replied Alfred, "is not of mean birth, but fortune hath refused him her gifts. He is poor, and was obliged by an inevitable accident to leave his country. Honour has forced him to shed a blood which called for vengeance, and the sword of the law hangs over him."

Elswitha's pride became a little calmed as she learned that Wulf's birth would not give occasion to insurmountable obstacles. "The gifts of fortune she disdains! Thousands of noble Saxons have lost their wealth by the hands of the conquering robbers, and only preserved their sword, without losing the esteem due to their origin." The heart of the damsel felt relieved, but she was too virtuous to give herself up to hopes which secretly and fearfully rose in her. "Our conversation is too long," said she, "we cannot, this time, prolong it."

Alfred considered these words as a token of assent, which promised him much, and he thought himself justified in remaining some days longer at the castle. The earl soon after ordered a heron

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chase, which was to the Saxon noble the most agreeable pastime; he honoured the courageous Wulf too sincerely to deprive him of this pleasure. Falconry having been the chief diversion of his youth, Alfred could very ably govern that bird;[24] from this knowledge Elswitha concluded, and that with pleasure, that Wulf must be of noble origin, as that occupation was only practised amongst the higher classes.

His falcon captured a rare bird; he brought it with the noblest attitude to the lady, and begged permission to take his leave. This news was painful, and the more she looked into her heart the more she found it filled with the image of the warrior. Alfred visited her on the following day, and, after some general formalities, said to her, in an unobserved moment, "I go where my duty calls me; for ever will I venerate the lovely Elswitha; for ever will I deplore my misfortune, which will not allow my love to disclose itself!" She sighed; his approaching departure aroused in her a painful sensation, which she could not conceal. "Oh! why are such merits banished within a low situation? Why is Elswitha not rather the daughter of a herdsman?"

Alfred replied in an eager tone, "Wulf would

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never have declared his love, had he thought it impossible that Elswitha should be happy with him. His rank is not yet lofty enough to flatter a princely maiden; but if she loved me, my arm might raise me to a station, in which I should be less unworthy of her. Can I flatter myself that the difference of fortune is the only cause of my rejection? Can I hope that Elswitha will love me if I raise myself nearer to her rank?"

Blushingly, and with down-cast eyes, the maiden responded: "How can Wulf require that I should give an answer on suppositions almost impossible to realize? How can he awaken deceitful hopes in me? Amid the din of war, he will easily forget a young maiden, with whom accident alone has made him acquainted; but a lady living in a retired castle, without diversion, would be but too unhappy if she gave herself up to a love only admissible in a supposed case: Farewell, my worthy Wulf! become as great as thou art virtuous; my best wishes accompany thee."

Not satisfied with this kind answer, Alfred endeavoured to move the maiden to a more explicit avowal of her love for him: "Yes, then, I go; the fire which devours me daily increases, and I must quench it. If Elswitha did not disdain me, the dif-

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ference of rank would soon vanish before her; love would guide her down to me, and she would feel that the possession of a true heart has some worth even for the proudest beauty. But Wulf not only awakens no love in her, he does not even excite compassion. Did Elswitha think Wulf's fate worthy of that, she would alleviate it with one word—with one innocent word."

"The word I am to say," said the blushing countess, "is a word too difficult to pronounce. I well perceive that Wulf will not be satisfied until I have confessed that I love him. But he will not be so unreasonable as not to perceive that my hand depends on a father, and my love shall never be parted from my hand. He who loves virtue, will not require of me an unvirtuous action; but he will be satisfied when I avow to him that I myself wish that fate would equal our stations; and that I might then pronounce that word which he requires." She modestly held out her hand, willingly allowed him to kiss it, and moved to leave him.

"No," said the generous Alfred, "Elswitha shall not nourish the painful thought that she loves one undeserving of her. No! she shall not let her heart be torn between a fond inclination, and the resist-

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ance to her duty. She will see—shortly see that she does not act against the claims of her birth by being favourable to Wulf; he will love her doubly because he has only to thank herself for her tenderness, which overcame the pride of nobility." He once more gladly imprinted a kiss on her hand, and returned to Athelney.

Some months later, after the celebrated victory over the Northmen, Alfred gave a grand feast to the victors who saved England; Ethelred was among the number. To the tournament given in memory of that victory, the noblest ladies of the rejoiced Saxons were invited. The knights combatted in the tournament for the prize, and the recognized king sat upon an elevated throne, next to which was another royal seat, adorned with the greatest splendour, for the queen of the feast, who was to distribute the prizes. A noble invited to that distinguished function the fair Elswitha. Her father, being informed of the intention of the king, consented to the pleasure of surprising his daughter by leading her suddenly to the throne, and bade her accept that place. The king descended from his throne, held out his hand to the modest maiden, and led her to her seat. "There is, and for ever, the place of Elswitha." She blushingly raised her eyes, and immediately perceived in the king—

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Wulf, now freed of the disguising colour, and in all the splendour of his high dignity. "May Alfred hope," said he to the frightened maiden, motioning her to sit down, "for that which Wulf could not obtain? May he implore Elswitha's love, without which he cannot live?" She bowed respectfully, cast down her eyes, and said in a loud voice, "She who loved the warrior knows that she should venerate the great Alfred." She then looked upon the tournament, distributed to the worthiest knights the valuable prizes, and on the same evening gave the delighted king her hand, and became his spouse, whom alone he ever loved.

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THE THIRD BOOK.

ALFRED THE LEGISLATOR.

DURING a period of thirty years, Alfred was not able to lay down his sword; he reconquered, gradually, the whole of England; he rejected the tax paid to the foreigners, obtained the dominion of the sea, and in fifty-two battles which he fought, acquired, in most of them, the victory, only by his well-calculated directions. At last his objects were attained, and a constant peace was purchased by great labour, and at the price of much noble blood. Alfred was now able to work for the interior amelioration of the kingdom, and a permanent tranquillity.[25] His fame is unexampled, for he did not allow victory to seduce him to a love of war. The benevolent king had too often seen how the noblest laurels were sprinkled with the blood of the bravest war-

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riors, how much misery war scattered over thousands and thousands; how it snatched away, in the blossom of their years, so many courageous young men, the hope of their country, while others were forced to lead a miserable life, borne with constant pain, or sickness,—the reward for their courageous actions; how the unchecked firebrand of war consumed the wealth of millions; and how general poverty, followed by starvation, pressed forward to the destruction of the people. Alfred never attacked; the wars which he undertook were only for the purpose of repulsing unjust aggressions, and the justice of his cause could alone induce his humane heart to sacrifice the blood of his brethren for the general welfare.

But Alfred found, after peace was obtained, a disordered realm, in which the sword alone had for so many years governed, that the existing laws had protected no one; where feeble innocence was forced to suffer, and the property of the inhabitants was not more secure than their lives. To extricate his people from this labyrinth the circumspect king endeavoured to make himself acquainted with the laws of the wisest nations; first, those of the Hebrews, proceeding from the All-wise, then with those of the Greeks, the Romans, the Danes, and the Saxons. He considered those

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different laws as a work which the cleverest men had already prepared for him, and chose from them those which he thought applicable and useful to his people.

The king was born in the darkest times, when the western nations had forgotten the language and arts of the Romans, when Charlemagne was obliged to borrow from the Arabian Aaron the works of art, when superstition occupied the throne of religion, and the priests began to claim general dominion. The king himself was brought up in those prejudices, and most of his confidants and teachers were priests. The manners and customs of the Saxons were familiar to him, and served him as a guide. Alfred was a wise legislator; but, from the unavoidable faults of his time, many imperfections arose, from which no human gifts could protect him. Notwithstanding that Alfred was devoted to the Roman bishop who brought him up, he never forgot that he was the king, and that all power in his realm was entrusted to him by the supreme governor. He subjected the clergy to the same laws which he dictated to his other subjects; he allowed the bishops no judicial authority, and chastised the guilty priests without soliciting their punishment from Rome, as his powerful grandson, the first Plantagenet, was forced to do.

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Alfred's laws became the laws of Edward, and the true source of English justice, in which a free and victorious people found its noblest privilege. He was the first who gave to each citizen others of the same quality to judge him; the defendant could not expect any injustice from them whose judge he himself might be, and whose security depended upon the very justice administered to their brethren. Alfred ordered that the noblemen should be judged by twelve others of the same rank; and to the plebeian he appointed eleven other citizens, under the presidency of a noble, as judges. This prerogative still exists, and till the end of the last century, no other nation had adopted the system of equality of rank of the jury and defendant; and, in fact, the defendant risks the same danger from the ignorance of the juryman, from the obstinacy of one of them, or from the artifice of an unjust prince, as in other countries, from an arbitrary judge.[26] Alfred dictated this manner of judging the impeached to his Saxons, and also to the Northmen.

Like all other laws of the northern people, the punishments which Alfred imposed for offences were very mild, and but few of them extended so far as the effusion of blood.[27] Rebellion, high treason, and the breach of public peace in a

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burgh, were alone punished with death, and even these could be redeemed, according to the old custom of the German people, by a certain weight of gold. Seduction of a married woman was regarded in the same light as the above-mentioned offences, and as the most criminal of all, because it destroyed the most sacred bond of society, and divided those whose union was the most intimate and necessary for the hope of the future generations. The priest who committed perjury, or stained his hand with blood, or went beyond the limits of chastity, was punished by the bishops, but forced likewise to present himself before the bar of the royal judges, and pay the king an adjudged fine. Persons who were suspected of a crime were obliged to give bail by others, or be taken into custody.

The Northern pirates had given so many examples of open violence, that robbing, and seizing of goods, was a general vice spread over the whole island; but this insecurity Alfred also found means to extirpate by a remedy never before known to the most civilized nations. Alfred first divided the kingdom into shires, the boundary of each of which was fixed. Every shire was sub-divided into hundreds, which were named according to their capability of taking up weapons, and every hundred

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consisted of ten housekeepers; every tithing had to give security, each one for all, and were bound all for one, that no individual should undertake anything against the laws, but appear before the judge when summoned. Nobody could obtain the protection of the law without being registered in one of the tithings; all that would not undergo this obligation were expelled that protection, and could be attacked with impunity by any one, robbed of their goods, and even of their lives. If one of the members of these tithings was suspected of a misdeed, and the whole tithing would not give security for him, he was imprisoned; and if he escaped before the warrant against him was put in execution, the tithing to which he belonged, and even the whole hundred, was forced to pay to the king a fine for this negligence. This tithing could avoid paying the fine, if all its members proved by oath their ignorance of the crime, and of the escape; but such evidence must also have been given by others, and witnessed by the neighbouring tithing; and if those would not confirm this evidence, the defaulter was forced to pay a very heavy fine. The goods of the escaped individual were seized, and if the value was not found sufficient to pay the fine, the whole tithing was obliged to make up the deficiency, and to take the responsibility of bringing the culprit before

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the judge, as soon as they were able to secure his person.[28] If a traveller visited one of Alfred's subjects, he was considered during *two* days as a guest, and any grievance that he might commit could not be accounted to his host, provided the latter could swear that he had no knowledge of the crime imputed to his guest; but if the visitor remained *three* days, the landlord was answerable for him as a member of his family.

Alfred would not undertake to attack the hereditary power of his earls, which was too deeply rooted in the constitution of the state; but he weakened that of the higher nobility, by investing every county with a burgrave, named by himself, who surveyed the country, and fulfilled the same functions that the ambassadors did under the Carlovingians. The king likewise appointed a judge in every county, before whom all judicial cases were brought and settled. Those judges moderated the power of the burgraves as well as that of the earls.[29]

The effect of these regulations was miraculous. Shortly before that time, no one could venture on the highway without being armed, and obliged to defend himself, as the law was powerless, and unable to protect him. But all at once, a general

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security reigned throughout the whole country. The traveller beheld the approach of night without terror. His gold, as well as his life, incurred no danger. The king ordered golden bracelets to be hung on trees, and the attraction of the booty tempted no one to risk the penalty of the laws; the officers of the king consequently brought back the treasures untouched.[30] So wise was the kind severity of the justice which watched over innocence, that it convinced the guilty their crimes were follies.

The next labour of Alfred was to make a statement of all estates and pieces of land throughout the kingdom, with their measurement, revenues, and rent-rolls; this enormous work Alfred accomplished at Winchester, in a century backward in science, and in a comparatively very short time. William the Conqueror renewed this land-book, and posterity has profited for nearly a thousand years, by the work of the wise Alfred, to fix taxes, as well as to settle contentions.

On this statistical account of England, and the division of the country into hundreds and tithings, were based the courts of justice, which Alfred instituted in every county, in every hundred, and in every tithing. The obtaining of justice was

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facilitated to every citizen by this measure; and the high right of administering it was in this manner withdrawn from the hands of the ignorant grandees, who were only attached to arms. The burgraves and the judges presided in the courts of justice, and every Saxon was obliged to submit himself to the verdict of his tithing, afterwards to that of the court of the hundred, and finally to that of the county.[30a]

Alfred found but few individuals capable of giving just decisions, but his wisdom was able to create them. He read, with unexampled ardour, all cases on which he was appealed to for his judgment; and if one of his burgraves, or the judge had given an unlawful decision, their punishment was inevitable. Ignorance would not protect them, as every one should know his own abilities, and not claim the office of a judge if he were not qualified to fulfil the duty which this office required. If cupidity or hatred was the cause of bending justice to arbitrariness, the punishment was, contrary to the Saxon custom,—death; and Alfred, who had so often pardoned the rebels and the perjury of robbers, spared not one of the unjust judges. Forty-four judges having given unlawful decisions, suffered capital punishment in one year,[30b] amongst whom was Cadwine, who sentenced a man

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to death, whom three members of a jury of twelve had found innocent; Hale paid for his wrongs with his life, because he spared a nobleman who had taken the estates of a Saxon by main force, and added them to the king's exchequer. Another judge was likewise sentenced to death, for imprisoning an offender without giving him an opportunity of defending himself. Uskitell sentenced a culprit to death, who confessed a crime meriting capital punishment, because he could not resist the pain of the rack; a crime for which no other evidence could be produced.[31] Alfred knew too well that the hardened wretch often derided and mocked justice, which could not condemn him, unless he accused himself;[32] whilst a man of sensitive nerves could not long resist the pain of the rack, and would rather calumniate himself, and pronounce his own sentence of death, than prolong insupportable torments. The torture has often been misapplied to punish the innocent and liberate the guilty.

The certainty that the king would soon discover any injustice, or the insufficiency of a verdict, and the conviction that those errors would be resented severely by Alfred, compelled the judges to instruct themselves precisely in the law, and judge with strict uprightness—in fact, as though

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the king was always present in the court. After a space of time, the benches were filled with enlightened men, who were strongly attached to their duty, instead of ignorant warriors.

The king devoted himself to the general instruction of his people. He applied his acquaintance with books and his knowledge of poetry to the amelioration of the general manners, and possessed the ability of illustrating his moral doctrines with fables, tales, and ingenious sentences, in order to make them generally useful. He knew that the charms of poetry introduced with more facility the severe thesis of virtue, and that the measurement of syllables, and its agreeable sound, impressed the laconic commands of wisdom. Alfred was himself the bard of his time, as well as the hero and legislator; and the extreme favour which he testified towards learned and clever men, made the sciences objects of general veneration, and excited the most serious efforts to acquire them. Posterity has preserved old songs, in which Alfred is represented as teaching his nobles true wisdom, and the path to eternal happiness; he instructed the knight, the bishop, and the judge, in the exercise of their duties, and the dignity resulting from their discharge. We also read his exhortation to the young Edward, his successor,

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whom he educated in a manner worthy of a prince.[28]

Alfred had made the experiment on himself, that science contributes very much towards goodness, and that the more a man discovers the inner beauty of virtue, the more he is inclined to love it; but those from whom that beauty is concealed only find their happiness in the illusion of the senses. The books of the wise ancients represent virtue as venerable, and vice as detestable; and the soul of the reader takes delight in the good which they so eloquently praise. The world is a much worse school, for there vice is frequently crowned with success, and timid virtue oppressed, because she detests the paths which alone appear to lead to fortune. Antoninus was formed by the writings of philosophers, and in the dark times, in which all the sciences were concealed, all true virtue, all generosity and humanity, seem to have vanished from the earth. Even under the despotic government of the servile Chinese, are the descendants of wild Scythians inspired by the doctrines of the old sages, and by the brilliant example of the forefathers of their people, for from among these barbarians arose Hangtschi, and Kienlong.

During the long wars which had raged in

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England, all sciences were utterly destroyed; in those times of misfortune man forgot all that was not immediately connected with his daily existence. There was not be found, in the whole kingdom of the West-Saxons, a single person who was able to translate the spirit of a Latin book into his own language; notwithstanding the whole liturgy of the Saxons was based on Latin books, songs, and lectures;[34] Alfred was therefore obliged to search, beyond the seas, for the means of instructing his people. In Ireland, which was at that time less ravaged than England, he found John the Hibernian, who had spent many years of his life at Athens and Italy, and understood the long-forgotten languages of the Orientals, a man who was in favour with Charles the Bald, and lived with him in familiarity, a man who knew how to jest in epigram, but was murdered by his own scholars, who were irritated against him. Alfred called from old Saxony, the source of his people, a learned abbot to the convent of Athelingay. Asser of Monmouth was so much devoted to his duties, that the king was not able to keep him longer than half of the year at his court, notwithstanding he had endowed him with the bishopric of Winchester.[35]

Alfred was penetrating and experienced in the knowledge of men. He discovered in a lad

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driving pigs, his future talents, and having rescued him from his degrading employment, and given him a liberal education, at last raised him to the rank of a bishop.

Neot, who was born in Cornwall, and canonized, acquired, during his irreproachable life, general veneration. He had educated the king, and was highly esteemed by him. To his remonstrances and counsels, many of the good deeds of Alfred are attributed.[36]

By the assistance of these learned and well-disposed men, Alfred was able to bring, eventually, the general instruction of his people into a better condition. He ascended the throne at a time when there was not in England a bishop who understood the sense of his Latin theological books; and a time arrived, during his life, in which no bishop existed in England who did not know at least the most of the theological matters that the dignity of his office required. The king facilitated the clergy in learning the more necessary of the sciences, by ordering the most useful books to be translated into the Saxon language, and he himself translated a work, in which the duty of a priest was described. For this beneficial purpose schools were absolutely neces-

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sary; he therefore appropriated his treasury to these charitable establishments. Adult persons are generally inflexible, like old trees, and cannot be bent in another direction; but juveniles can be guided to the purpose to which a wise education will form them. Their pure nature accepts as readily the love of goodness and truth, as, when deprived of discipline, they are abandoned to their wild inclinations.

Of all the great undertakings of Alfred, nothing raised his realm higher than the foundation of the Oxford school. Thousands of learned men, thousands of teachers of truth and virtue, have been trained at this seat of the muses; and their good actions have owed their first origin to the generosity and clemency of Alfred, who founded this seminary of virtue and wisdom. After a thousand years nothing was discovered at Oxford—no useful doctrine proved,—no touching discourse delivered, by which men were awakened to improvement—no part of deep-searching science, by which the human spirit was enlightened—was written, which may not in part be attributed to Alfred. The erection of this new high school was, indeed, but an imitation of the cloisters, which were, in Alfred's time, the only domicile of science. The king erected three buildings, in which perpetually

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eighty young men should be brought up, from the interest of the amount devoted to this foundation. He submitted them to certain regulations, which were based on religion and science. This high school served to posterity as a model; benevolent men and wise monarchs augmented it by several institutions, and it flourishes, even in our corrupt time, principally in respect to the fine arts, languages, and theology.[37]

The spirit of order, which distinguished Alfred from all princes of his time, was extended over all the different branches of his government. He trained all his Saxons as soldiers of the country, without agriculture or domestic maintenance suffering by it. All the inhabitants of a county were counted and registered. One part of them was stationed in the towns and castles as garrisons, of which a sufficient number were so strongly fortified, that every point of the kingdom was protected; the remainder of the inhabitants were obliged to be prepared for sudden attacks, which too often occurred from the rebellious character of the Scandinavians. Half of them were summoned to move to the places where their assistance was required, and the other part served as a reserve, and replaced the former after they had fulfilled their time of the service. Thus the Saxons were prac-

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tised in arms, and Alfred was no longer forced to lead, with a heavy heart and with little hope of victory, rude and inexperienced countrymen against the practised Northern warriors. Every county possessed its commander, to whom was entrusted the management of its military concerns. By salutary laws, and constant practice in arms, the Saxons again obtained the lost confidence in themselves, and met the dreaded Northmen with an impatience which their leaders alone could restrain. This great change in the Saxons, formerly so unfortunate, was a fresh proof that a wise prince can effect anything, and that the hearts of his people are, in his hands, like clay, which he can mould to all his purposes.

Alfred's vessels were large, and, according to the custom of that time, each vessel was propelled by forty oars, and were twice as high as the ships of the Northmen. The warriors, who threw their javelins and missive weapons upon the enemy, had a great advantage, against which no courage could resist.[38] Alfred consequently attained his aim, to set his kingdom in security against the Northern pirates, who in former times were driven away, after making many thousands unfortunate, and who now feared the shores of his realm, watched as they were by mighty fleets.[39] Alfred obtained

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more, through Providence, than he himself expected. He, who had formerly lost nearly all his land, attained the dominion of the seas, the innate right of an English kingdom, and which Alfred's descendants have extended to all the seas which flow round the two hemispheres.[40]

Like his great successors, Alfred sought for his subjects new ways and means for fruitful labour; a wiser and more beneficial effort than momentary liberality. The latter only nourishes the subject temporarily; but the former enables not only himself, but likewise his descendants, to procure their existence at all times, and without difficulty.

The arts are sisters, and must assist each other. That of war requires many others:—arts which work in metal, wood, and other vegetable productions:—arts which draw and construct utensils of war:—in all of which England was impoverished, because, during thirty years war, the destructive sword of the Northmen had been hanging over the heads of its inhabitants, and all their power had been required for the single purpose of averting immediate destruction. All these arts Alfred recalled to his country. His liberality promised to the artist a sufficient subsistence; his affability

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augmented the pleasure of a sojourn in his kingdom; from all parts of Germany, from the realm of the Franks, which was then suffering under bad princes, from jealous Scotland, from Wales, (then reconciled with Alfred,) from the industrious Low Countries, artists and professional men hastened to seek the protection of a recompensing monarch, from whom no unmerited disgrace nor undeserved expulsion was to be feared. England was soon filled with clever men, able to execute perfect works for the king, and to teach the Saxon youths the best manipulations, so as to be, thereafter, as perfect as themselves.[41]

Alfred knew that a king is a man; that he was unable to overlook all himself; that he could not select in all cases the best methods, and could not find out, for all purposes, the shortest means. He therefore consulted other men, who were fully instructed in the subject, and listened with great attention and patience to all who related to him the results of their experience; he compared the ideas of different wise men, and was then able to select the best advice given to him.[41a] Under Alfred, England obtained three regular chambers of senate, in which business was transacted. The great senate of the realm decided the most important concerns of the state, controlled the exist-

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ing management, and improved the laws. The bishops, the earls, the burgraves, and the judges had their seats in this council, and likewise the thanes, who had obtained hereditary fiefs from the crown, as a recompense for the services of war, which they had to fulfil. A more select council administered the business which required more secrecy or quicker expectations, and took into consideration the matters which the great senate should decide.[42] Alfred selected for this purpose bishops, abbots, and other clergymen who were constantly around his person, whose virtues were known to him, and who were enlightened by science. In the unfortunate time in which Alfred reigned, noblemen, and often princes, were, by reason of their ignorance, excluded from the enjoyment of the use of books, and even from the transaction of important business. Most of them were not able to read, and thought all their duty to the country consisted in bravely fighting, and courageously dying, for it.

Alfred, nevertheless, neglected no opportunity of obtaining from every part of the country, and from every town, knowledge of that which required amelioration, or which, by negligence, might be dangerous to the general welfare. He created a perpetual law, that twice in every year

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the great council of the whole kingdom, the bishops, and the nobles of the realm, should assemble near the king; and in this great union the laws, which the king himself gave, should be deliberated. They decided likewise the contests amongst the noblemen, and reflected upon the general welfare of the realm.

Notwithstanding the darkness of his times Alfred was enlightened enough to perceive how dangerous the importance of the earls was to him. They reached too near his power, and were considered much higher than the thanes; the wise king used several means to weaken the authority of these earls.[43] He decided all great matters himself, amongst which was murder, and allowed his judges to pass sentence for attacks on the highway, and other minor offences which took place in the counties. The less important matters were brought before the justice of the tithing, then that of the hundred, and lastly that of the county court, in which the earls, the bishops, the burgraves, the judges, and the thanes, had their seats and voices. From this court they appealed to the king. The earls preserved the prerogative of the presidency, the command of the soldiers, and the duty of making known the king's orders to his subjects.[44]

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THE FOURTH BOOK.

ALFRED THE SAGE.

ORDER was once more restored throughout the realm. The military concerns, arts, sciences, and the constitution of the state were ameliorated, after which Alfred devoted his time in beautifying and improving of his realm, for which he had already prepared the means. The first of these occupations, strictly connected with the protection of the kingdom, was the re-establishment of the burnt towns, which were lying in ruins. London owes to him its rebuilding.[45] From a fortified harbour of the Northmen it was raised to a town, and from these beginnings it successively became the immense seat of commerce, and the metropolis of the whole realm.

Winchester, which had been levelled to the ground under King Ethelred, was rebuilt with

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more solidity and magnificence by King Alfred. The Saxon towns had been nearly wholly composed of huts, and the torches of the wandering Scandinavians could burn them to ashes in the course of one day. Winchester, the principal seat of his realm, Alfred built of hewn and squared stone.

The mouths of the great streams and the shores of the sea were protected by the king with new castles and fortifications, in which garrisons were constantly kept, who were able to keep off the first attack of the landing robbers, until the Saxons could be assembled and armed, to meet the pirates with sufficient force. This easy method of keeping off the sea robbers had been hitherto neglected by the Saxons, and they had paid for this negligence by their noblest blood.[46]

Alfred lived in times when religion and sciences were only to be found with the monks; they were wise, and were regarded as saints. The king could not separate himself from the prejudices of his country; his heart, devoted to the fear of God, mistook the esteem which the word of God merits with the veneration which the servant of that word claimed. He was attached to the priests, who were his most secret and confidential counsellors. He therefore built convents, and founded places

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of refuge for those who wished to retire from the bustle of the world. The first convent which he erected was at Athelingay; he perpetuated by it the memory of the degradation which he had there suffered; and on the same bogs which concealed him from the victorious Northmen, he founded a cloister on posts. Another house of God was founded at Shaftesbury, intended as a retreat for the daughters of his nobility; and a burial place, for himself and his successors, was erected at Winchester, in another convent.[47]

He gifted the bishopric of Durham and other convents with lands in perpetuity. The liberal master did not perceive that with the best intention, by the richness of his donation, he had given a real poison to the priests, a beverage which intoxicated them, and through which, power, pride, and tyranny prevailed in their hearts.[48]

Alfred, devoted as he was to religion, did not forget that external magnificence is essential to princes; the people do not value them by the goodness of their heart, but by the outward signs of their power and grandeur. Alfred, therefore, rebuilt the ruined palaces of the kings with hewn stones, and ornamented the country mansions, in

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which the kings sometimes sought a refuge, to recover themselves from the pressure of business.[49]

A general lover of order, he arranged the interior of his house on the wisest principles. His servants consisted of three divisions, each of which served four months in the year, and were at liberty the remaining eight.[50]

His virtue was not accompanied by a severe exterior, nor was he reserved in his manners. He admired the effect of music, having acquired his taste for that pleasure during his sojourn in Rome, for which purpose he invited to his court the most clever artists and the most agreeable voices. He knew that continual labour wearies an active mind, and that it should be awakened by ethereal arts.

Like all Saxons, he was in his youth much given to hunting and hawking. The coolness of the morning, the fresh air, and the exercise of the body rendered this pleasure salutary, and Alfred knew how to adapt it to the general welfare, by directing his weapons against the wild beasts, which he extirpated, thereby protecting his subjects against the robbers of their seed. Of all the Saxons, he was most skilful in that practice.[51]

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He took care likewise to perfect the production of the ornaments which contributed to the splendour of his court, and was the first of the Saxon kings who took into his pay artists able to work gold and precious stones;[52] he was so experienced himself in those arts as to be able to instruct others. To add to the pomp of great solemnities, a royal crown was made under his directions.

Of all the kings of Saxony, he was the first who formed the excellent plan of creating knights. This reward of martial service is in the power of princes; it does not diminish his treasures, nor does it produce a tax, which the poor, like the rich, must bear; it has the same, and even more effect upon those endowed with it than either gold or silver. This reward, when applied to its real purpose, is a public testimony of the esteem of the prince, on which that of the people is generally based, one of the most sensible pleasures a feeling heart can wish for. Alfred knighted his grandson, Athelstan, by giving him a purple dress, and girding him with a short Saxon sword in a golden sheath. Athelstan afterwards answered the expectations of his ancestor, who perfectly appreciated him, for he became a powerful and respected king.[53]

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Alfred divided his abilities and knowledge among many different branches of arts, in each of which he was distinguished. Of so many thousands of princes there scarcely ever was one who could, with such readiness and energy, partake of and oversee so many different occupations, of which there was not a single one but its object was for the general welfare of his people.[54]

But of all his exertions, the principal one was to please God. No one would, even in our present altered times, endeavour to diminish the glory of Alfred, because the divine service of his age still possessed somewhat of the monkish manners; but those who know the human heart will only require of man what he can fulfil in the circumstances in which Providence has placed him, and that will not be considered as a fault in him by the Almighty, or in human eyes.[55]

In the piety of this wise prince the taste of his age was also predominant; but Alfred was too experienced to imitate other princes, by abandoning the reins of government, to seek in a convent the tranquillity of his soul. Alfred remained a laborious prince, constantly occupied with the welfare of his people.

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He shared both his wealth and his time with religion. He made two equal divisions of his revenues, the one being intended for acts of benevolence, and subdivided between the poor, the convents, and the schools. The half which the king kept to himself was distributed in equal parts among his courtiers, artists, professional men, and to strangers who were disposed to reside in his dominions. The maintenance of the king and his court was defrayed by the estates of the crown, which were let to countrymen for a certain supply of the fruits of the season, and the game which they caught.[56]

Time, which is certainly our own property, Alfred divided into two parts, one of which was devoted to the service of the Almighty; in this he included that which he employed in writing the sentences he extracted from books, or his own thoughts, which he inscribed in his hand-books, from which arose collections with which it was his greatest delight to occupy himself.[57] He was so careful not to withdraw any of his time intended for devotion, (in an age when watches were not extant,) that he weighed and measured some wax candles, and regulated his time by them. The invention of protecting candles by transparent horn when glass had not yet been

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invented, is ascribed to him, but as it was not unknown to the ancients, it must have been lost in the times of disorder and ignorance.[58] The measurement and destination of his time Alfred dedicated to God after his victory at Althelney.

His desire that illness and constant pain should prevent his giving himself up to sensuality, was indeed carried too far. In his younger years this desire, the fruit of his fear of offending God, was almost fulfilled to too great an extent; for during twenty-five years an internal and unknown complaint caused him great pains, and shortened considerably the days of his inestimable life.[59] Can Alfred have doubted the wisdom of the Being of whom he implored this abstemiousness? and had the giver of all gifts no other means than to shorten Alfred's days, and render his life partly unserviceable, by causing pain to overcome all patience?

Alfred's sensitiveness to the duties of religion, caused the undiminished tenderness which the king preserved in so many disastrous wars, when perjury and infidelity were so often the rewards of his goodness. Nothing could overcome his resolution to forgive, as he wished himself to be forgiven. Ten times did he grant, even after the

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most troublesome victories, unconditional pardon; and he never permitted himself to commit an act of vengeance.

In his private life he was a faithful and amiable husband, a good father, and a gracious master. Although a great portion of his life was devoted to the safety of his people in inevitable wars, and his advantages in chivalry many and superior, he preferred, from his youth, the sciences to war. From the obscurity of the times, he had not learned to read in his twelfth year; but one book interested him to such a degree, that he had no rest until he could perfectly read it, and appropriate its contents to himself.[60]

Rude as the Saxon language was at that time, from Alfred's lips and pen it became eloquent. He translated into Saxon the works of ancient wisdom, with a fidelity and expression which no other learned man could equal. These efforts he applied to the wisest of ancient laws, to history, sentences and parallels of spiritual works; the whole collection of the revealed writings he translated into his own language. He likewise wrote his own history, and the events of his life, so full of contrarities and troubles; and even in those works of less consequence he preserved the

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custom of beginning nothing that he was not capable of fulfilling.[61]

Notwithstanding his continual sufferings, the troublesome life which he led, and the many disasters which he met with, Alfred was ever good humoured and affable; no agitation or weariness could disturb his constant serenity, a virtue possessed only by the rarest characters; common souls alone give way to such impressions, and allow their tempers to be ruffled by the slightest cause. They do not feel, during the momentary annoyance, the importance, for other reasons, of preserving their equanimity. Little as Alfred was affected by misfortune, still less was he elated by good fortune, or the feeling of his own dignity. He fought, he worked, with intrepid courage, and was as silent about his personal actions, as though they were not his own. Frequently did he keep his wavering people from flight, by exposing his own forehead to the fury of the enemy; and withal he considered the effects of his bravery as accidental and of no merit, because his soul was wholly fixed on God, and in Him alone he trusted.

His glory flew, in the few years of his too-short life, beyond the limits of Europe. The voice of the people willingly gave him the name of the

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Great Alfred, whilst that title has only been borrowed by many other princes from the flattery of courtiers. Rome venerated his virtues, and the Patriarch of Jerusalem testified over many seas the respect which the inhabitants of this far country bore for the virtues of the King of the Saxons.[62] From all countries various artists and learned men hastened to the throne, whereon sat a Christian, a philosopher, a hero, and a promoter of all useful and fine arts.

The king had, by the beautiful Elswitha, two sons; Edward, the elder, a wise king and legislator, and Ethelward, a learned prince, who died in his youth at Oxford; then the courageous Athelfleda, the spouse of the Earl of Mercia; after his death she governed his extensive country, vanquished the rebellious Northmen, and founded several towns, amongst which are Chester, Stafford, and Warwick; she likewise subdued a part of Wales, which had previously separated from England, and merited the name of the king, whose virtue she possessed.[63]

Athelswitha was married to Baldwin, the powerful Count of Flanders, and one of her great-granddaughters, Matilda, was wife of William the Conqueror. From her originated the Plantagenets,

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by a second Matilda; and from them, after having governed over England three hundred years, arose the Tudors and the Stuarts, whose rights have now devolved to the house of Guelph. A third Matilda, daughter of the first Plantagenet, was married to Henry the Lion, and was the female ancestress of the Guelphs, in which the blood of the Stuarts, with that of the Plantagenets is united; and by these two progenitors the royal blood of Alfred and Bodan became the powerful governors of mighty Britain. Providence has granted to their sceptre immense countries in another hemisphere, which at the time of Alfred was quite unknown to the old world. The Niger and the Ganges flow under their dominion, and the great empire of Hindostan venerates the descendants of Alfred. But far more glory than the possession of all these countries give is due to the inherited virtue, the love of the arts and sciences, which gave beneficial peace the preference over war and triumph; and the matrimonial felicity which is possessed by the succession of the Guelphs and Alfred. Thus has Providence fulfilled, that the seed of those who please God, should reach to fifty generations from their illustrious predecessor.

Alfred died from the effects of an illness which

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he had himself prayed for, having only lived fifty-two years. His death occurred just at the end of the ninth century, when the Carlovingians were on the decline, and the grandson of Robert the Powerful approached every day nearer to the frontier of the West Franks. Piety, which had been Alfred's guide during his life-time, did not forsake him at his death. He descended from his throne like a person travelling from one royal seat to another, convinced that he would there be likewise happy. He hoped to obtain, from the Supreme Judge, a better life, in which no terrestrial privileges could attend him: the recompense for a life devoted to the welfare of the people entrusted to him; and no one has ever doubted that with so many good qualities his little inevitable faults would be veiled by the supreme goodness of the just Judge of the world.

[His last three years were not distinguished by any particular actions, and historians have recorded nothing of that period of his life but that he devoted it to the already mentioned occupations, and conversations with his counsellors, and principally with his private counsellor, Amund, a fragment of which will be found in the following book.]

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THE FIFTH BOOK.

ALFRED AND HIS COUNSELLOR.

AMUND, Alfred's counsellor, was born at the feet of the Seven-mountains, on the shore of the Dale River, and was the offspring of Arwid the Hero. He spent his juvenile years, like the northern warriors generally, in gymnastic practices; he was a powerful wrestler, a clever archer, and a courageous hunter. He would attack the furious boar in his own cavern, and, standing upright before his terrible paws, force his knife into his heart. He sang war ballads, and his heart was elated at the names of old heroes. He burned with the desire to make the name of his paternal castle renowned by his actions, and afterwards to obtain the reward for the blood he had spilt in the hall of Odin.

Hastings, the northern prince, was going to Byzantium, and was the commander of a legion

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of Waregern, the only real warriors whom the degenerate Greeks then possessed, and to whom alone they could entrust the protection of their prince. Faithful and inexperienced in the treason of the new Romans, true to their oath, brave and constant, these few combatants were the support of the sinking empire. The young Amund accompanied the hardy Hastings, and both were enrolled under the Waregern. Many a deed of faithful courage and sturdy resolution was performed by the worthy youth. Enlightened as he was, he acknowledged the advantages which remained to the Greek nation. He studied their history, also the constitution of their court and their state, which Europe long imitated, though it despised the cowardice of the Byzantians. He learned their laws, and enriched his mind with their treasures of ancient wisdom.

Young and gay, he fell in love with the beautiful Theophane, friend of the Princess Eudoxia, who was beloved and married to Hastings. The noble form of the Greek lady, her manners, and even the timid modesty with which she declined his advances, augmented Amund's inclination; but he gained this beauty at last, by noble actions, and by saving her father, who would have been murdered, on the occasion of a rebellion of the

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Blues and Greens, by the party who was against him. Amund's sword soon opened a path to the unfortunate man, and the faint-hearted Byzantians fled before the heavy blows of their opponents. Victorious, he restored the liberated father to the beautiful lady. Theophane was not ungrateful to so much merit, and accepted his hand, and the worthy man, who so much loved the bride, adored the spouse.

An imperial family was brought suddenly to ruin; and Hastings, who defended it in vain so long as he could handle his sword, was overpowered; nothing remaining for his safety but a ship which was lying in the harbour; thither he brought his princess and his comrade, Amund, with the fair Theophane. They were fortunate enough to reach the mouth of the Niester, by roads at that time daily traversed by the Scandinavians, and arrived at the friendly Novogorod, returning from thence to Sweden.

The view of the rough and barren mountains was extremely unpleasant to the fair Greek. She found there no resemblance to the charming climate which the mild south spreads over Byzantium. Huts of immense stone, insufficiently protected against the cold, replaced the magnificent palaces

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in which Eudoxia had passed her juvenile years. The retarded spring was not free from sharp winds, and the long winter destroyed the ornaments of the earth. Harvest brought not with it the sweet grape; the rich fruits of Greece glittered not on the trees; and, in the eyes of the delicate princess, the earth appeared always clad in mourning.

Hastings loved the fair Eudoxia, and promised her that he would with his sword conquer milder countries, in which she should govern. He took her with him to Bemfleet, and likewise the charming Theophane, who were in the fortified camp of the Scandinavians when the Saxons attacked it, while most of their warriors were absent. Hastings' rage was unbounded when he learned this misadventure, and even the brave Amund shed tears of despair when informed of the loss of his Theophane: But the noble Alfred dried those tears. "Go," said he, to the fair spouses of his enemies, "tell the Northmen that I wage no war with women; and only carry it on forcedly with the oppressors of my people: my greatest desire is to gain their friendship." Alfred had admired the Greek beauty, but his temperate heart was closed to all foreign charms.[64]

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Hastings requited Alfred's generosity with redoubled enmity; but Amund was more noble-minded, and perfectly happy in the arms of his beloved Theophane. He soon acquired the friendship of the hero, whom he had to thank for the pleasure of again embracing her. She herself praised to Amund the careful generosity with which Alfred endeavoured to avert from the northern ladies any rudeness on the part of the Saxon warriors, and the delicacy with which he alleviated the sufferings of their imprisonment.

As the Northmen were forced to leave England, and bound themselves no more to molest the Saxons, Amund repaired, fearlessly, to Alfred's court:—"Thanks to thy virtues, thou hast now a combatant more at thy disposal; I am Amund, friend of Hastings, but thine, if thou acceptest me." The name of Amund was not unknown to Alfred; he combined elegant manners with bravery, and wisdom with both. Alfred extended his royal hand to him:—"I accept thy friendship," said he to the Scandinavian, "thou shalt share my fortune." The queen embraced the fair Theophane, and Alfred's court became to the married couple a seat of constant pleasure. Amund followed the king in all his wars, and, of all his friends, was the most ready to avert from his

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prince the enemy's weapons, presenting his own breast as his shield.

After Alfred had for ever dispersed his external enemies, he was constantly occupied in establishing order, and increasing the general prosperity of his Saxons; Amund pursued with a vigilant eye every step of the legislator. He compared the constitution of the Saxon kingdom with that of the monarchy of Byzantium, with those of the Romans, and of the better portion of the Greeks, with whose history he was closely connected.

The faults of the Saxon constitution did not escape his penetration; and he observed there scarcely remained any of the old liberties of the Germans, but a powerful nobility, near whom the nation languished in ignominous contempt.

Long had Amund improved his views by fresh information; long had his heart burned to disclose the truth to a king, who loved and listened to it; at last he was irritated by the infidelity of some of the nobles, whom Alfred had vanquished and pardoned, as he was wont to do. The king had just repaired with Amund to a retired estate, not far from his royal residence, when his kind nature

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deeply felt the necessity, in which he had so often been placed, to arm himself against some rebellious nobles. "I love my people," said the worthy prince, "and do all that my foresight can imagine to make England happy; how is it then possible that her sons do not love me? Me, who love them above everything." Amund bowed to his royal friend:—"Will Alfred listen to his servant, who loves him? will he allow him to be free, and to disclose to him his thoughts as they rise in his faithful heart? *The Saxons are not worse than other people. If they are ungrateful, the source lays in the unbalanced constitution of the state.*[65] Where there exists no equilibrium, those are always the most discontented on whose side the scale is lightest. *Thy nobility are too great, and not subservient enough to the laws; thy commoners are too little, and between the nobility and them the distance is too great.*[66] The greatest have but one step more to ascend to become kings; and until that step is made, they never will be quiet. If thy Saxon commoners had remained in their natural dignity, the nobles would have found in them a counterpoise, which would prevent them from too hardily raising their wings aloft.

"Amund has long seen the world; he is acquainted with the constitution of the free north:

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the Saxons have likewise formerly lived in liberty; but thy ancestors, the conquerors of Britain, have given up the reins of government to the nobility, and left the commoners as their victims."

Alfred, who gladly listened to the counsel of faithful friends, replied: "My friend has seen the Orient, what has he there found, whereby the constitution of the Saxons can be improved?"

"Far from us," said the warrior, "in the east, there is a powerful realm, the greatest on the surface of the globe, the empire of the Serens, (Northern-China,) whence the silk is sent, passing by the source of the Ganges, over the snow-capped mountains of India, and through Persia to Byzantium, in the isles of the Ægean Sea, in the mild Cos; they produce a web, the work of a kind of caterpillar. Theophane herself has embroidered with this silk, and is now working a veil, which she intends for her kind protectress, the beautiful Elswitha.[67] The empire of the Serens is the seat of arts, the triumph of agriculture, and the mother of innumerable inhabitants; for, when compared to the blessed Kathay, the remainder of the earth is but a desert, with a few huts scattered over it. So I have been informed by merchants, who had known in India Seren traders, and thence brought

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the productions of that intelligent nation to Byzantium.

"The Serens are, without doubt, the oldest of civilized nations. They had already wise legislators and useful arts, when the Greeks subsisted upon rapine and fallen acorns, which nature produced for the inactive savages. Kathay is the seat of order; the emperor is the father of all his subjects, and governs so many millions with the same veneration as the father of a family governs his children. He receives from them the same love and obedience which they give to their parents. He is the only source of all honour, and under him all his subjects are coins of equal weight, whom the imperial stamp alone can value or distinguish.

"They acknowledge no nobility; all commands are issued by the emperor, and gradually communicated from the higher to the lower officers of the empire down to the lowest countryman; and there are none who resist these orders, or who would dare delay them in the slightest degree. *No one brings from his cradle superior rights, which can raise him above the common people.*[68] The only existing nobility in that country are the descendants of a sage, who, sixteen hundred years ago,

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taught the virtues in the realm of the Serens, at the time when Pythagoras taught the rude Greek the art of surveying, and the knowledge of divinity."

Alfred, who had never seen any nation in which the nobility did not form the most venerated part, here interrupted his friendly narrator:—"*Such a nation,*" said he, hastily, "*must be cowards, for the delicate sense of honour can alone supersede the love of life, and nowhere can that sense so vividly predominate as in the noble, to whom the least affront is insupportable, and to whom life becomes a burden if spent without honours.*[69] The noble is, besides, free from common cares, his hands are hardened for the sword, as is his body for riding; hunting has prepared him for war, and victory is his only vocation, the object of his life. The needy countryman forgets honour in the exertions necessary for his nourishment. Accustomed to humiliation, he feels not the lofty aspirations which a hero must feel.[70] Brought up to mean labour, he has not the knowledge to spur on a spirited horse against the enemy, of pressing with lowered spear among their thickest throngs, of giving wounds, and avoiding them. Often have I experienced that the strength of my armies lay in my nobles."

Amund replied:—"The well-read Alfred knows

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the history of the Greeks; they had no nobles; and who was more courageous than a Spartan, who could scarcely name his father, who was only the son of the country, but not the son of the noble? *Too narrowly is the sense of honours encompassed in one class, and that one which can never be numerous, because it lives in idleness, and obtains its subsistence by the sweat of those beneath it. Such a constitution is the best, and such nations must be the most victorious, in which the sense of honour is spread over the whole population, where every citizen glows for victory with the same ardour that inspires the general.*[71] It is not the deficiency in the nobility that intimidates the Serens; there are other reasons. The terrible Saracen is a camel-driver; but who fights more desperately? who has acquired more victories? who has subdued more countries than the free strollers of Sandy Arabia? *There are, among the Serens, too many shopkeepers and artisans. The greater number of inhabitants consist chiefly of men whose limbs have lost their power, from being employed in sedentary occupations, which do not strengthen their arms by constant exertions. They can neither support inconveniences, rude winds, or wearying night-watches.*[72] Another cause of the cowardice of the Serens is the servile treatment which they endure from their superiors. Their immense realm is governed by the whip. The most eminent Seren

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is subject to the basest punishment, the courage of the nation thus loses its energies. *It bends without resistance under the yoke, and feels no wish for honour, but merely for the means of subsistence, and the lowest pleasures of the senses.*[73] The realm of the Serens is certainly less suitable for war than for peace; but its prince requires not conquests; he is satisfied with the immense territory which he has inherited of his forefathers, and refuses the voluntary submission offered him by his neighbours, whom the wealth of the Serens have attracted to seek the protection of their governor, the father of his people.

"This great realm enjoys, however, the extreme advantage, that none of the great venture to revolt against the emperor, being alone, and not rooted in or related to any powerful nobility. The first storm of imperial disgrace consequently annihilates him without resistance. A king of the Saxons cannot punish any of the nobles without, at the same time, injuring his relations, his race, and often the whole nobility, who look upon the humiliation of one of them as the possibility of humiliating the whole body.

"Warlike courage is less required by the Serens, as they have only dispersed and divided neigh-

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bours, who can, perhaps, disturb their limits, but they cannot dangerously wound the realm. From the beginning of history, the empire of the Serens has always remained invincible. The race of kings has been extinguished, other Serens have soared up to the throne, but no foreign power could subdue the realm.[74]

"Much merit is due to the Serens. If we trace back to great antiquity, to an epoch in which no other realm of the world existed, when we reach the limits of the fabulous, where history commences, we always find a well-mannered, industrious, and innumerable people, always arts, laws, sages, and great princes, a *Yu*, a *Tschung*, a *Wenwang*, and a *Wuwang*.

"But," continued Amund, bowing respectfully before the king, "I have not a blind reverence for unlimited power: I am a free-born Goth, whose heart would not subdue itself to a prince, did not veneration lead me to serve him, whom I regard best fitted for command. I will show to the king, from my own experience, the consequences of unlimited power."

After some days, the fair Theophane accompanied Amund to the court. She brought to the

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noble Elswitha a white veil, woven of glittering silk, in which she had embroidered flowers and animals in the most splendid colours, in the brilliant tints with which nature alone, in mild countries, paints its creations, and which the weaker rays of the sun, in northern regions, is not able to accomplish. The queen admired the art and the beautiful tissue, and requited the present of the charming Greek with the finest linen from Flanders, whose slender thread appeared almost thinner than could be spun by human hands. "In our frosty country," said Alfred, "nature promises less, and leaves more to the intelligence of man; but industry likewise can here find treasures, which contribute as much to the happiness of the people as the fertility of nature."[75] Theophane acknowledged that she had seen nothing in that seat of arts, Byzantium, to surpass this work, and with regard to utility, flax would not yield to silk.[76]

Alfred invited Amund to continue the conversation:—"The absolute power of the prince is a yoke," said the warrior, "under which no one can be happy. Vainly the favour of the court smiles on us; who can quietly enjoy such uncertain happiness, when, without fault, a wrinkle on the brow of the prince is sufficient to disgrace us?

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"*A good ruler certainly employs his great power for the welfare of his people; and does more good as he is less curbed. He watches over his servants, attracts their attention, and does not allow the lowest of his people to live under unjust oppression.*[77] Such were the first heads of the imperial races of the Saxons; but those who were generated of them in the purple, who rose to the enjoyment of higher power, without the necessity of performing good actions to merit the throne, soon regarded power as the means of satisfying their desires. They filled their palaces with the fairest women; *they lost, by spectacles, the time they owed to their people; and diversion was their only business.*[78] Their officers, selected by the advice of miserable eunuchs, or by their concubines, studied no other interest than their own greatness, their consequence, wealth, and pleasure; every one successively used his subordinate as the instrument of his desires; *and the lowest, the most useful citizen, starved with excessive labour, so that the courtier, the judge, and the officers of the crown, might live in haughtiness and extreme splendour.*[79] The people sighed and prayed to heaven for relief; they soon murmured, and at last death was preferable to their situation; they gave themselves up to despair; ambition furnished them with leaders; courageous and active rebels drove the degenerate voluptuary

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from the throne, and extirpated the race, which had become an insupportable burden upon the people.[80]

"Nothing is more dangerous than universal power. He, who can murder his servant by a frown, and can, with impunity, reward years of vices with poison,[81] himself arouses the annihilating dagger, from which no one can find himself secure; he who can punish without the aid of the law, exile at will, and suspend the functions of his officers of rank, applies his power to the execution of his desires. When he is driven by his corrupted lusts, he attacks the modesty of the noblest women, the property of the poor, the treasures of the church, the honour of the judges, and the property generally of his subjects, to satisfy them. He strives to triumph by unnecessary wars and victories, which his subjects are forced to purchase with their blood, He expends on splendid palaces the substance of the citizen; he dissipates on insignificant solemnities, in spectacles and banquets, the bread and property of his people.[82] Alfred knows what monsters were formed in great Rome, by the philter of unlimited power, from those who in their youth promised to become somewhat better. God alone is All-wise; to Him

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belongs universal power; but faulty man needs bonds to limit his desires.

"As no one prevents the absolute monarch from the fulfilment of his will, so his first minister, his general, judge, and secretary, become despots; the whole nation will sink under the yoke which the powerful always impose on the weak, and its weight will crush the common man, who is not able in his turn to oppress another.[83]

"Such a monarch is beloved by no one. Every citizen is regarded by him as a tool destined by Providence to fulfil his will, whose services he can enjoy without being bound to any obligation towards him. The citizen looks with fear and hatred upon the palace in which the dissipator debauches his blood and his property. He takes no interest in the preservation of his prince, and acknowledges no greater misfortunes than that which affects himself. *An audacious rebel assaults, with a handful of ruffians, the deserted palace, and no citizen offers to protect the monarch who is the sole cause of his misfortunes.*[84] I have myself witnessed the tragedy which precipitated the unfortunate Michael from the throne. He had neglected the welfare of the realm, was a squanderer, who forgot, over his wine, his duty as father of the people. A man

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of the lowest class of his subjects arose by his good qualities to the highest dignity. He found a murderous rabble at his disposal; before the Waregern could use their weapons, Michael was killed, and our fidelity no longer found any object to protect; thus fell, under the sword of a few robbers, the successor of the Constantines and the Cæsars. The population took so little interest in his fate, that no tears were shed, not a sigh heard, no shop closed, no business disturbed; and after a few hours, the whole of Byzantium shouted long life to the Emperor Basilius, with the same joyful devoutness as though he had been the real heir to the throne. Had Michael bound his crown to the welfare of his people, had the laws been his boundary, or had his fall interfered with the interests of the country, Basilius would never have had the rash thought of rising to the throne over Michael's corpse.[85] But the despot is like an inverted pyramid, an immense weight rests on one point on the overturned top. The breeze of a western wind is sufficient to throw down the nonsensical building.

"*The oppressed subject does not at all times seize the poignard; he often bends to the yoke with inactive murmurs. Religion may console him in chains, or the fear of a paid army force him to patience;*[86] but

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even then the despotic monarch is unhappy, far more unhappy than the prince who is bound by laws; the latter has around him a particular body of the state, who report the truth to him; he has the nobles of the realm who will not obey unjust orders; he has laws which he cannot go beyond without danger and resistance; all these powers which restrain him, watch at the same time over his security.[87] He becomes not unjust, he does not encroach on the property of his subjects, nor the lives of his servants, because he cannot attain his purpose without dishonouring himself, and incuring insurmountable resistance. He learns from experience, *that those inhabitants alone willingly obey who love their master, and to acquire that love he must make them happy; and that he cannot make his people happy without being himself industrious, kind, and just.*[88] The bare thought of many an action, which to the oriental despot is but play and pastime, would trouble the whole soul of a prince, who recollects that his grandeur is based on the general veneration, which is founded on his virtues. What a tyrant of Byzantium calmly projects and executes in cold blood, as the blinding of an officer of the state, or the mutilation of a suspected noble, has never entered the thoughts of a Scandinavian king."

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Alfred replied, "I observe that Amund is not favourable to the power of the nobles, nor to the unlimited sway of the king. But does he know of a constitution in which all powers are brought into equilibrium, where the king is secured against disobedience and rebellion, and the people against oppression? I have studied history, and find *that government the best, in which a virtuous man reigns; it may be a king—or, as it was at Sparta, the nobles—or, as at Rome, the people.*[89] When, on the contrary, the rulers are unjust and spoilt, then is the state likewise unhappy. Thus it was under the bad Cæsars at Rome, under the unjust people at Athens, and under the oppressive nobles of the later Sparta; the constitution of the state cannot prevent the evil consequences of a government which follows its own vicious desires."

Amund bowed before the king. "Alfred loves truth, and shall hear it, even though it be contrary to his own thoughts. But that cannot be the case; for he who seeks the truth will always find it. All that is administered by *man* is certainly imperfect; but still the influence of the form of the constitution is very great on the morals of the people, and even on the government of the prince.

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"I have proved and experienced the abuse of unlimited power. In the hands of Alfred it is a blissful gift of heaven; but how seldom does fate give us an Alfred! The wisdom of a legislator must prevent the unworthy son of a Solomon from destroying all that the sagacity and labour of the father has built. It must not trust the fate of the people to the slight motives which often render the son of a king unable or unwilling to provide for the good of his subjects.[90] The early death of the wisest and most virtuous monarch might leave a minor in the hands of such women, or such courtiers, as would turn the delicate plant, not yet bent to any virtue, in the direction of vice. The unworthy should not be at liberty, nor should it be easy for him to become the flagellant of God, he who should be His state holder. I have known a people, generous, and trained to all that is noble, fall gradually and by imperceptible steps into the situation of an irregular aristocracy, which was at the same time the realm of confusion.[91] It had taken to itself the power of deciding the general welfare of all; an obstinate purchased mercenary could stop the wheel of government in its course, at which one hundred thousand nobles were uselessly working. At length the laws were worse than vices, and rebellion was the consequence of the laws. All the virtue of

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the king and the nobility were lost to the people, because disorder was legal, and order a sufficient pretext for rebellion.

"The neighbouring princes perceived the incorrigible weakness of that realm, and divided it quietly among themselves, as brothers part the field of their father; and the ungrateful nobles, to whom the bridle of the law had been insupportable, fell under the yoke of unlimited power. Neither the spoilation of morals nor bad princes was the cause of the misfortunes of that mighty nation: it lay only in the nonsensical constitution of their state.

"It is naturally a worthy task of the wise legislators to weigh all parts of the state so justly against each other, as to make them all balance; that the power of one part should not have the preponderance, but the general welfare unite all powers in one common direction. Such a constitution would protect the nation against the most powerful revolution, which often brings other states to ruin. It would free the honour and property of each citizen from the danger of being seized upon by a more powerful nation, or by the prejudices of a misled multitude. It would augment the power of the state, by preventing some

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members of it from working in an opposite direction, and draw them together to a central point, which would be the united will of all parties."[92]

"Amund," said Alfred, "seems to me to speak like a physician, who demonstrates how desirable it would be to obtain a medicine which would cool the over-heated, and heat that which has grown cold; which would strengthen the relaxed, and mollify the hardened parts; and which could cure all opposite evils. He might easily convince me that such a remedy would be the most valuable gift of heaven, but it will be very difficult to discover this medicament."

"Nature," said Amund, smiling, "has made the remedy for our maladies to grow in their neighbourhood, and it is the duty of man to find them out and apply them. The constitution which avoids the most general evils originates from the German and northern people. It may be traced to obscure antiquity; the Cheruskierns, who were anterior to the Romans, were acquainted with it, and it is still preserved in Scandinavia; but the Saxons have departed from that constitution which were a work worthy of an Alfred to re-establish, for under it the ancestors of the Saxons were free, warlike, and too powerful for all their enemies.[93]

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"There are three parts of which a people, a great people, must essentially be formed. In a little state, a monarch is less required, and it may be easily governed in a democratic form;[94] but a large realm has too many occupations to be managed by many governors, or be discussed by many persons, without a prejudicial prolongation of time. A great realm must also bestow too many great offices, and give too much power to a citizen, for the laws to serve as a sufficient bridle. It must keep armies, and these also would soon make the general preponderate over the citizen. *Rome lost her equilibrium when she possessed too extended a country, and too numerous legions. Sylla, Pompey, and Cæsar, were too mighty for the increasing importance of the law.*[95]

"A *great* nation should, therefore, be commanded by a king; the administration of power, the direction of armies, the transactions with other nations, and all that requires prompt resolution, even the choice of war or peace, must be left to his decision. The law reigns under his name; he appoints the judges, he is the source of nobility and honour, he elects members to the offices; and his sanction is required to all alterations of the laws, and all great decisions of the nation. The people must supply him with sufficient wealth to maintain the lustre of a court,

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and the dignity of the realm towards his subjects; and to reward useful arts and suffering merit.[96] He must be able to leave the realm in quietness to his heir; *in an elective empire every election weakens the reins of the prince, until there remains nothing more than the external splendour of the throne.*[97]

"The person of the king must be sacred, secured against all molestation, and protected by the laws against all violence, as on his preservation rests the tranquillity of the state; the the agressor of his king offends the majesty of the whole people, as he represents the dignity of the whole society.[98]

"But the laws alone must protect the king. He cannot administer justice for himself; his power would be too far superior to that of every citizen; he would soon be a despot and a tyrant, if he could punish, if he could seize the goods or the person of him by whom he believes himself offended.[99] *He should be, of course, protected by the laws against the attacks of the slanderous, who shake deeper than is believed the pillars of the government, by withdrawing the confidence of the people from him who is charged with the general welfare. Slowly the calumniators stir the fire, which at last becomes*

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general, and, when the minds of the greater part of the nation are prejudiced, breaks out into an all-consuming flame; and never is a prince overthrown without the state being weakened, and many thousands becoming miserable.[100]

"It is an afflicting acknowledgment, but the history of the world sufficiently proves it, that a bad prince has greater power, and is more protected, than a good one. The virtuous prince is blackened without danger, and rendered suspicious to his people; he suffers what can possibly be suffered, but when he can no longer prolong his patience, he calls, but too late, on the slow assistance of the law, from which he receives no relief; when once a great number of citizens are prejudiced, they wish a diminution of his power. A bad prince finds in all constitutions sufficient means to win the laws through the judges;[101] to purchase the fearful by the example of his revenge; the greedy, by the dissipation of treasures; and the ambitious, by raising him in honour.[102] He uses means which the virtuous disdain, but which effect the corruption of men with infallible power. It is therefore necessary that the laws protect the good king, and maintain him in veneration in the eyes of the nation, *and suppress, by punishment, the voice of unbridled calumny. The more free the*

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people the greater necessity for this protection, without which, it is impossible for the king to preserve the power which is necessary to hold the reins of government."

Alfred smiled. "Amund seems to provide for my fame after death; but will he then silence the punishing voice of truth, that voice which raises itself against bad princes, and warns the citizen to oppose attacks against the general security and the increase of a dangerous power?"[103]

"The actions of a bad prince," said Amund, "would speak louder against him than the tongue of hatred. If the principles are unshakably based, if the conditions by which the king is bound are well secured, if the potency of the other powers of the realm are exactly defined, no prince will be able to increase his authority, or raise himself above the laws without offending the other powers of the state, nor violate the boundaries of law without its being seen, even by the lowest citizen. The worst princes are the least calumniated, inevitable vengeance suppresses the complaints, even of the oppressed.

"*But the more silent a people remains, the more it feels; and there is a limit which the prince cannot*

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transgress without arming against himself every other power of the realm, and without being unavoidably hurled from the throne.[104] It were not difficult for me to name more than one prince who punished an accidental word with a fine of two thousand pounds of gold,[105] and open complaints even with mutilation; and in whose realm no other voice was heard than that of flattery. But when he attacked the fundamental laws of the country, the tyrant suddenly fell, by the combined forces of all those parties who had previously pursued each other, but who soon united against the general oppressor."

"Amund," said the wise Alfred, "here starts a difficult question. When does the king begin to forfeit his right to the throne? where is the boundary he must transgress, that his people should attain the right of hurling him from the throne? Amund forgets *that the faults of a prince differ extremely in magnitude, and that even the people is not an enlightened judge, who can justly weigh these faults.* If the people will resent the slightest fault of the prince, no government will be firm, for every prince commits faults; and prejudice or interest may point out to the people faults in the prince, which in reality are virtues. *If we admit a convention between the prince and the people, giving the former the right to govern so long as he fulfils the*

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conditions; and the people the right to withdraw their obedience, so soon as these are not exactly complied with by the ruler; and if that convention be the fundamental law of all governments, I pity the prince who ascends such a tottering throne. I pity the people, who is continually forced to purchase, by violence and bloodshed, the downfal of one prince and the election of another, of whom sufficient reasons would soon be found to overthrow him, like the former one.

"If, on the contrary, the prince can oppress his people with impunity; if, under the pretence of a general peace, nobody can oppose his acts of violence; if he tears to himself, by dreadful taxes, the most necessary subsistence of the poor, and lets his citizens starve—all for the purpose of satisfying his desires; if he seizes, arbitrarily, the lives of his subjects, incarcerates them without a trial, and executes, through bribed judges, unconvicted; if he attacks the honour and dignity of the best citizens, voluntarily destroys the ancestorial courts of justice; if he reluctantly admits, and punishes by branding the representations of working truth, *shall then millions be miserable because one mortal is unjust? Has the Supreme Governor created those millions for one man only? Shall the happiness of so many thousands be counterbalanced by the foolish will*

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of a single individual? Shall free citizens allow themselves to be killed like sheep, and yet kiss the hand of their murderer? A medium must therefore be found by which resistance becomes legal, and by which the prince loses the right to enjoy his privileges; but does Amund know of such a medium?"[106]

"It is difficult, wise Alfred," said the worthy Amund, "it is very difficult exactly to point out this limit, which, however, must be done. Even among the mildest people, even among the cowardly Serens, there is such a limit. Tscheu transgressed it, and was hurled down by the virtuous Wuwang. Wuwang appealed to the voice of heaven: 'He,' said he, 'He, the Tien, commands me to protect the earth against the violence of the tyrant.' The only means of finding out this limit is the exact definition of the fundamental laws, and the boundaries of the royal power. If the king cannot levy taxes, and nevertheless imposes them; if he likewise cannot himself acquire the right, and nevertheless arbitrarily imprisons and executes men; if he gives laws which cannot be sanctioned by the nobility, or the representatives of the people; if he weakens the laws, which have obtained their power from the legislative bodies by arbitrary remission of punishments; if he prevents

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the liberty of opinion, and the resolutions of the other bodies of the kingdom; if he, in fine, reverses the fundamental laws of the realm, he certainly forfeits his claim to general obedience, and has become the enemy of his people, who can themselves reiterate his enmity, and their representatives are entitled to place him again within the boundaries of the law.

"So long as he is only faulty without attacking the fundamental laws—so long as he only does injury by badly selected councils—so long as he only misapprehends the wisest expedients in the business of the state—and so long as he is only weak but not tyrannical—so long he deserves the remonstrances of his nobles and the people. He certainly trifles away the general esteem, and can be punished through his officers, and hindered in the execution of his imprudent decisions by the other powers of the kingdom. *But to dethrone a prince is so very great an evil, that the bitter remedy should not be tried until there remains no other for the salvation of the country.*

"It is very fortunate for the human race that it does not reach at once the extreme of malignity; that the power of morals, and the fear of the results, prevent a sudden fall from virtue to the

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abyss of vice; and that great offences are attempted only by degrees. A prince can, therefore, in a moderate constitution, often be stopped in the unfortunate course of his degeneration, mostly by expostulations, by the legal resistance of the powers joined to him, by the tokens of general aversion, or by the resentment shown to his bad officers.[107] *Seldom will the sad necessity arise, in a well-balanced constitution, of the people being obliged to arm against the individual for whom they would, at other times, think it their duty to lay down their lives. Only in such states where, without fundamental laws, no equilibrium existed, and the whole nation was tottering, have there been such tyrants, in whose blood the people were forced to look for their security.*"[108]

"Thus the Roman dominion was an incubation of warlike power, and hypocritical and political wisdom, in which the exterior of a republic was preserved, and nevertheless all the power was dependent on the swords of the pretorians and the legions. Thus it was at Byzantium, where no limit encircled the power of the prince, whose will was executed without the assistance of the law, where nothing prevented him from risking all, but where, likewise, nothing protected him from the despair of the oppressed. The courtier threatened

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with disgrace, or the general deprived of his dignity, knows that he runs no greater risk by rebellion than by obedience, that he need not fear either the laws or the people, but solely the prince, who is his enemy; and if he has but the slightest hope of plunging his dagger into the heart of the prince, before the axe reaches his own head, he will rather risk the almost hopeless enterprise. And the prince often succumbs for the very reason, that he had power over all, because no watchful law limited him, or prevented him from falling in the abyss; because the laws afforded him no greater protection than they did to his subjects.[109]

"Seldom, and but at distant intervals, does history relate of an absolute monarch having been his own enemy to such a degree as to surmount all obstacles, to break through all laws, and commit such acts of violence as to bring his subjects to despair, without which they would never undertake a dangerous revolution against a legitimate prince occupying his throne.

"In despotic states, however, such revolutions occur, on the contrary, very often, arising from the most insignificant circumstances. Even in civilized Byzantium, where Christianity teaches patience and obedience, where powerful priests

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are mostly attached to the sovereign, and keep back the agitation of the people, even there sitteth perhaps now the fiftieth dynasty since the first Cæsar suppressed liberty; for in the regions of the wild Orientals, one tyrant supplants another, as clouds driven by a storm expel each other in the wide regions of the air.

"*The second power in a moderate constitution is the nobility.* Alfred perhaps suspects Amund of not being favourable to them, but Amund were then against himself, for he must thank his birth for the privileges and dignities which the commoners willingly yield to the nobleman. Nobility is no invention of the Greeks, nor of the civilized Egyptians, nor of the intelligent Serens; it was attached, even at Rome, to only half the descendants of the ancient heroes. The privileges of the nobility may be sought in the north. The first nobleman was a valiant warrior; his sons followed his track, and the only occupation of many succeeding generations was war. By the continued importance which was given to the warlike courage, and the rearing in arms to the descendants of the first heroes, the people were accustomed to distinguish the defenders of the nation from the lower class of people who looked after cattle, who cultivated the ground, and were

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less practised in the use of weapons of war, and consequently less dreaded; which tribes lived in constant strife, and were less fit to protect the nation.

"The privileges of the nobility became more constant and limited, when, for the first time, the later emperors of the Romans and Byzantians gave pieces of ground to their warriors, who colonized on the boundaries of the wild people, on condition of continuing in the practice of their weapons, and to defend those limits of the realm; it thereby became the duty of entire generations constantly to practice the art of war; and an irrecoverable property was given them as a privilege over the other citizens, whose sons very often lost the estates acquired by the toils of their fathers.

"Greater became the difference between the noble and the plebian, as warlike people subdued others less acquainted with war, whilst frequently whole victorious armies shared amongst themselves the conquered lands, and only granted life to the vanquished on the hard condition of cultivating the ground, that the warriors might live without trouble in the diverting exercises of hunting and warfare. Thus the Sarmatians were created nobles, and their knaves are the old and

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weak inhabitants of the great countries through which I wandered, and which are situated on the northern limits of Europe and Asia.

"The nobility are certainly useful in a state, as the exemption from all low occupations, the delicate sense of honour, the encouragement which arises from the hope of dignity, even the in-born pride based on the merits of their forefathers, raises the spirit of the nobles, and their wealth gives them an independence and importance which an artisan or tradesman can scarcely attain. These privileges must be applied, by a wise legislator, so that the nobility may, in general, defend the state, assist the king, and avert from the commoners all kinds of oppression.[110]

"Alfred will allow his servant liberty to speak the truth. Amongst his Anglo-Saxons the nobility have too many privileges; they become dangerous to the state; *the commoners, properly speaking, form the people, and if every citizen has the right to claim of the constitution as much happiness as possible, the common Saxon does not enjoy that right.* He cannot obtain the high places of honour, he cannot even willingly sacrifice his property to the wants of the state, as the king prescribes the taxes to the noble, who keeps it off of himself by imposing

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that burden in proportion to his will on the commoner. *The land is the property of the nobility, the countryman is merely his farmer.*[111] The existence of the labourer, the lives of his children, and even their marriages depend on the caprice of the noble.

"The nobility are equally dangerous to the king. All the weapons are in their hands alone, every earl being the general of his subordinates. The command depends, in the first instance, on the noble, and only through him on the king. The unwillingness of the nobles impedes the mass of the soldiers, paralyzes their services, and deprives the king of the means of subsistence for his armies. One more step, or one more equivocal enterprise of the king, by which the nobility think themselves offended, and the earls will turn their arms upon the king himself; and the commoners, who are under the power of the nobility, having obtained from them their fields, expect from them their bread, and will certainly serve the noble against the king, of whom they know nothing, except through the commands of the nobility.[112]

"The nobility have likewise the administration of justice; they, who have not the least connexion

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with any business, but hunting and war, and who consider their own will as a law, instead of the law governing their will. This prerogative makes the commoner even more subject to the noble. The displeasure of the earl is a condemning verdict for his adherents. His favour alone lays the proper value upon the action of him who has acquired it. Another disadvantage is, that the estates are too immensely great, and give the nobility a too great and not sufficiently divided power.[113]

"They must certainly be placed by a wise legislator in a situation wherein they can be useful to the state, to the king, and to the people; and wherein they prove no incumbrance to any member of the state. The jurisdiction cannot be entrusted to them; they have too many matters to settle with their bondsmen, their farmers, and the king, which would greatly influence their decisions; and the Anglo-Saxon nobility have, besides, not been zealous enough in enlightening their minds, as that we may entrust them with the very difficult task of drawing justice from the darkness in which it is oftentimes concealed. *For judges, men must be selected who are brought up to read, in the knowledge of the laws, and in the research of principles for every case. The judge must not be settled in the county, wherein he must likewise not*

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possess any property, nor any interest wherefore to turn the scales of justice on any one party.[114]

"Much less should the power of arms and the command in war be allotted to the earl. The warriors belong to the country and to its father—the king, and are not the property of an earl nor of the county. The noble might certainly be very advantageously employed in commanding hundreds and thousands of soldiers. His experience in arms, his ambition, and even the respect with which the commoners are inspired, fits him for the command. But the general, the colonel, and the captain, must be selected by the king, and no right to dignities in war should be inherited. *The king selects the most able and zealous citizens of the state.* Some are, from birth, timid or weak; and others, from capriciousness, unjust or evil-minded.[115]

"The common soldier, the captain, and the colonel, must be subject only to the king, and to none else. As England is now administered, every county is the seat of a petty king, who has his own sorrows and his own advantages, and who only studies the general welfare if it be in accordance with his own. The king must likewise direct the exercises of war; he must give orders as to

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where every legion shall be marched to, and to what purpose they shall serve; he must nourish and arm them; an unanimous spirit must revive the whole forces of the country, and unite them all to one purpose."

Alfred listened attentively. He felt the truth of the observations which Amund addressed to him; but the wise king observed, at the same time, that such a great alteration in the powers of the nobles would produce a general revolt, which could not be easily quelled. He vowed to diminish their too extensive privileges, but acknowledged that the execution of this decision would require much time, and should only take place gradually. He withdrew, in fact, the jurisdiction from the nobility, but his early death prevented him from diminishing the power which they had in military matters.

The king, nevertheless, made an objection to his friend. "Amund withdraws from the nobility the command in warfare, and the seat in the court of justice; but what kind of justice does he reserve for these nobles, that they may be useful to their country."

"Alfred," said Amund, "assembles yearly the

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nobles of the realm, and considers with them the welfare of the country; this assembly he only calls at will, but it should be permanent, and moreover founded on the constitution of the state. The three powers of the realm—the king, the nobles, and the delegates of the people, should assemble every year. The day of the opening of this great convention is fixed by the king, and he alone can dissolve it.[116]

"The head of each noble lineage possesses a hereditary and essential voice in the meeting of the states of the empire, and nobility is created by the king, and inherited by all future male generations. This hereditary right, allotted to the noble and independent, would be lost if the granted privilege died with the ennobled and meritorious man.[117]

"On the meeting of the diet all great business of the empire, the taxes, and laws, are propounded in the hall where the knights meet, and no decision becomes legally valid unless sanctioned by the nobility. To this assembly the bishops are joined, as they alone possess some of the sciences;[118] the consideration of the business would be an emulation for the nobles, which would elevate their minds, by exciting them to use all their power to

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speak before their co-governors on all questions, with profundity and impression. This is the only method of withdrawing the nobles from the occupation of hunting and arms, and to invite them to adorn their minds with a knowledge of the laws and the history of their country.[119] The presence of learned and experienced bishops will increase their ardour, and they will be ashamed to allow themselves to be guided by those who are born far beneath them, and are only approximate to them by the force of their mental faculties. In assemblies in which men can only make impressions by conviction, the preference of birth cannot be allowed a preponderance over equal nobleness of mind; and he who will not submit himself to others' opinions, must learn to support his own by a superior knowledge of the case, and powerful eloquence. This kind of emulation awoke orators and statesmen in warlike Rome; it formed the precise justness of a Cæsar, the flowing eloquence of a Tullius, and the manful seriousness of a Cato.[120]

"I would go farther," continued Amund, "I would leave neither to the bishops nor the judges the last decision of justice. I would convert the meeting-hall of the knights into a supreme court of justice, in which disputes should be finally

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decided. The learned men would merely assist in this court, but the nobles judge. I hope, likewise, that such a right would, from their thirsting ambition for honour and their innate privilege, induce the nobles to strive after that function, and endeavour to merit it by their knowledge of the law, their natural moderation, and the impression and character of their elocution. I have no doubt that the ignorant knights, who commonly attest their credentials with engraved stones, would, after a few years, be able to administer the great business of the kingdom.

"Then the king could select from amongst them the chancellors, the ambassadors, the council, and the higher functionaries of the state, who are now selected from the priests and monks. The nobles, who now live as retired princes in their castles, would be drawn to the court, would be more connected with the king, and more united to him by their dignity. The people would perceive with pleasure that the king divided his power with such men, beneath whose rank they are born themselves, and would envy them less than plebians risen from amongst them to these high offices.

Such a change in the state can be easily effected.

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It leaves the high functions of the burghers undisturbed; but what I now have to demonstrate the king will find more strange; nevertheless the constitution of the state which I will trace is nothing more than the extremely old constitution of all the northern people, the Germanians, the Scandinavians, the powerful Franks, and even that of the Saxons, although the preponderance of the nobility has successively oppressed the people, and abased it nearly to servitude.[121]

"Our ancestors were all alike; he who carried weapons, possessed an equal share in the government of the people, a security he was prepared to purchase with his blood. When great decisions were to be taken, war declared, or peace concluded, the whole nation was assembled, the army of free Celts, its shouts, the sound of clashing shields, announced the will of the people, which became a law. They selected their commanders, and even their kings. The king was a warrior, who acquired the confidence of the people by his bravery. He was a general, but not master of his co-citizen; even from the fruit of his victories there was no pretence that he could claim for booty in preference to a common citizen.[122]

"All men have the same right to happiness;

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and a state must be formed to make as many of its inhabitants as possible happy, and that in the highest degree which it is possible to obtain; it is there that a despotic government is faulty.[123] It only provides for the power and happiness of the regent, and to that sacrifices the comfort of the subject, who is considered as a mere tool by which the monarch executes his purposes. But wise legislators do not require among many millions that only *one* should enjoy perfect happiness.[124] Nor should the power at any time be separated from the capability of exercising it. To an enlightened mind, it seems contradictory to see a knight in a cradle, as his delicate hands may, perhaps, never be strong enough to handle a sword. It seems perfectly ridiculous not to find in the evident advantages of a rational mind, nor in those of manly courage, but *only* in the privilege of ancestors, sufficient grounds for one to command those, without whose counsels he cannot even lead himself."[124a]

Alfred replied:—"My ancestors acted wisely in changing that portion of the constitution. Men are not all alike: such an equality is a fiction of proud sophists.[125] Valour raises one citizen above another to a deserved height, but wisdom can raise him above all. He who is able to give counsels,

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that will lead a whole nation to prosperity, is of greater utility to the people than one of the thousands who follow him through the path which he points out, and which they would themselves never have discovered. The value of every citizen consists in the portion he contributes towards the general welfare.

"If men are not all alike, their voices cannot be worthy of a like esteem. The initiated opinions of a thousand ignorant men are not worth more than the wisdom of the one, whom they all follow. The multitude are often misled by yielding to the fiery words of ambition, construed to the taste and prejudice of the people, and ornamented with flattering eloquence. I have studied the cruel effects of the speeches of a discontented tribune, of an ambitious Cleon, and of a seducing Demosthenes, which neither the serious profundity of Phocion, nor the undisguised virtue of the younger Cato, could resist.[126]

"Like the waves of the seas raised by a heavy gale, the minds of the thoughtless people are agitated by the directions they receive from an agreeable orator. Of all forms of government, I would least approve of that in which the superior power is in the hands of the people. They are

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neither prepared by education for politics, nor have they acquired experience from practice; how can they, who were raised from common occupations, with uncultivated minds, decide on the highest matters of the realm? Neither wisdom nor my friend would wish to do this, he, who has seen so many nations, and who has learned from history how to give advice for the present times."[127]

"I am far," said Amund, "from drawing the people to the deliberation, and to trust them with the supreme power:—too well do I know how a multitude judges. I have been deputed as ambassador from the Byzantian court to the Pazinakes, who live on the banks of the cataracts of Borysthenes, of which the capital is Setscha. All the warriors of the nation live there without admitting any women; and from that island they make destructive sallies into the neighbouring Sarmatia, into fruitful Datia, and into wealthy Bulgaria.[127a] These warriors assemble every year, and select their leaders and their judges. Every citizen is equal to the other, and the voice of an inexperienced lad is equally valued with that of an old man who had carried on the wars of his people for fifty years, and, as commander, had led them to victories. At the same time an inquiry into the conduct of the leader of the past year is

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held, and a verdict given. I have witnessed that a general, unheard and unconvicted, was ill-treated, deprived of all his estates, and expelled the rights of the country, merely on a suspicion that he was inclined towards Byzantium. Neither the honour, nor the property, nor the life of a citizen, enjoy the lowest security in a constitution, where the will of the mass is considered the only existing law.[128] After some years other orators arose, and the sage, who, as a traitor to the people, had suffered the severest punishment, was replaced in his seat of honour. The Pazinakes are Scythes, and unlearned; but did the people of Rome show more justice to the victorious Coriolanus, to his preserver, Camillus, or to Tullius Cicero? Has Athens not banished Aristides, executed Phocion, and sentenced a cup of poison to Socrates, the first man who applied philosophy to promote virtue. *If power remains in the hands of the ignorant, if the constitution of the state cannot oppose a dam to the torrent of prejudices, the mass of the people become themselves the tyrants; for those are the real tyrants who consider their will the only existing law.*[129]

"But it is easy to give to the people an essential share in government, without slackening the rein to unjust actions. They—the people—have, however, a certain claim to a share in govern-

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ment: they form the chief part of the nation. *Their industry nourishes the king and the noble, and their blood purchases security and peace to the mother country.*[130] Their happiness, indeed, forms the most essential part of the prosperity of the whole state; and to acquire that none can strive with more ardour or more faith than the people themselves, who long for that happiness. The nobles accustom themselves too easily to look with contempt upon the people; they are too much disposed to lay the burden of the state upon them, and to free themselves from it.[131] Often, but too often, has a prince thought to become more happy by increasing his power, and found this increase in the abasement of his people, by whose impoverishment alone he could extricate himself from the abyss into which his desires to triumph, his inclination to lust, and his vanity nourished by pomp, had plunged him.

"But before the people can have a share in the government, they must be free. This, as yet, the Anglo-Saxons are not. They are farmers of the nobles, who can force them at will from their lands, and deprive them of the means of subsistence, of the fruits of the earth, and of their labour. The people must have property, and must possess the land which they cultivate. *So*

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long as they only toil for the profit of the landlord—so long as the cultivation of the field only increases the grandeur of the earl, without enriching the countryman —so long will the peasant be unwilling to cure the defects of the earth, or to try to increase its fruitfulness by his labour. He will not drain the ditches to lead away the polluting water; he will not put fertilizing earth on fields which are not his own; he will return with avarice and economy to the earth that which the earth has yielded him; he will find it sufficient to enjoy himself, without heeding whether, after his lease is expired, the land becomes a desert: a proprietor provides for the future fertility of the soil; his wish is that it should yield to him in his old age his necessary subsistence; that it should nourish his children and grandsons. He works with zeal and pleasure upon an improvement which shall better his own situation, and risks a present expense and the labour of today, that after years, after centuries, the field may produce more sheaves, and the planted forest yield more shade to his descendants.[132]

"To transfer the possession of lands into the hands of the people, the king must grant them perpetual leases of his dominions, and *abolish the law of primogeniture of the nobles.* If the noble could sell his estate, or distribute it amongst his children, the immense lands of the earl would

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soon be divided, and would arrive through innumerable channels into the hands of the labourers, who could then always pay a higher price for land, which would only require a smaller expense from them, and would produce them a larger income than to the noble, who is obliged to divide the fruits of the ground with the farmer.[133]

"Neither can a wisely balanced state admit that one citizen should seek protection from another. Only the state itself, its guardian the king, and its will the law, should protect the life, the property, and the honour of every member of the nation. There are amongst the Anglo-Saxons many thousands who have sought protection from acts of violence by the nobles. This usurpation on the rights of the state is inadmissible. The citizen will then be no longer attached to his country, nor to his king, but only to his protector, and expecting from him his preservation, will strive to serve him by his obedience, and will rise with him to rebellion, not because he is oppressed by the king, but merely because he cannot then separate himself from the noble, on whose protection he rests his security.

"*Neither should justice be administered by the noble; nor should he punish crimes; nor should he*

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shed, in the name of the law, the blood of criminals.[134] With the sword of justice, the noble likewise intimidates the citizen, whose property depends on a verdict of the nobles, and his life on their arbitration. All powers of the empire must be concentrated in the state, and none should be allowed to place itself between the state and the people. Still less can prudence approve of citizens and boroughs forming a league among themselves, and the whole union taking upon them to defend each other.[135] If an important member of such a confederacy happened to consider himself offended, even though it were without cause, and should regard the endured grievance as of more consequence than the quietness of the state, how easy were it for the whole league to revolt, unlawfully to oppress the defender, and to kindle a civil war? One confederation might fall out with the other; whole provinces might sieze their weapons, and on England might they wreak their vengeance. All wrongs should be resented by the law, and to the king alone should be allowed the use of the sword."

Alfred listened attentively. The wise king sufficiently felt that the constitution of his realm was not justly balanced; that the nobles had too much power, and himself not enough, and that

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the people were perfectly impotent. But his experience and reflection convinced him that all these evils were not to be removed by a strong remedy, and that only a long series of mild measures were necessary to improve the state, without putting it in inevitable danger.[136] He executed what circumstances allowed him, and only after many centuries were all the wishes of Amund fulfilled. But Alfred effected something. He made a law which obliged every master to give freedom to such of his vassals as became Christians, after the space of a year.

"The people," continued the combatant, at a later period of their intercourse, "are now free, and their chains are broken. It is therefore now possible to give them that share which nature has assigned; but the unbridled mass must not administer that power. The people must select a great council from amongst them, which, united with the king and the nobles, would represent the third power of the realm, and form one of the states of the empire, in whose united hands the rudder should be placed. *The number of these representatives must be so great, that not one, powerful among the few, shall have too much influence; that a bad prince shall not, by presents and lucrative offices, seduce to his interest too great a portion of these repre-*

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sentatives, and make the deputies tools of oppression, instead of intercessors for the people.[137]

"The men who should be selected to represent the people must be *men of property*, men who cannot be so easily corrupted to accept presents, whose time, devoted to the service of the country, is free from low labour; and *who have received an education* that renders them capable to deliberate with knowledge on the high rights of the people, and the welfare of the empire; and to find out the means of promoting the general weal, as well as to avert menacing evils. This inherited wealth of a deputy can be most exactly ascertained by measuring the ground, and from it the amount which a representative of the people should possess. I regard the ground as the only positive wealth, and the most secure, which connects a man to his mother-country. Metals and moveables can be bought by a citizen of another country, but his property in land he can nowhere possess and enjoy, except in England. Let the realm be in prosperity, and his estates will be productive to him. Peace, order, justice, and wise institutions, will make his acres fruitful, and himself wealthy. In time of disturbances, in the decrease of order and trade, and in the misfortunes of the realm, his fields will be changed into deserts.[138]

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"According to the book in which the wisdom of Alfred has registered the number of acres of the kingdom, two hundred and forty three thousand herds are recorded. Of these, five hundred men should be selected for the great council of the realm. Those proposed must be in possession of five hundred herds, and every elector should be owner of at least five.[139]

"As six thousand souls live in the realm, three thousand assemble every time to elect the representatives; *but these electors must also have their lands within the country; the possessor of the acres has alone a real interest in their welfare. He who possesses nothing can lose nothing in disorder and riot, and he can easily be bribed at a little price, or by the mere satisfying of his sensual desires, to let the country be represented by individuals who have neither the will nor the ability to fulfil the duties of that high office.* I find that sixteen acres of land qualify the countryman to give his vote at elections of deputies.[140]

"Every year, after the fruits of the earth are housed, the king assembles the nobles and the representatives of the commons.[141] To those deputies by whom the people are represented, the wants of the crown are submitted; for a heavy, long-

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protracted war, and maintenance of a navy, cannot be supplied by the domains of the king; and it would be injurious to the state if these royal possessions were too much enlarged. They possess the fault that they are not the property of the individuals who cultivate them, and therefore never obtain the complete attention that the real possessor bestows upon his own estates. To allow to the king the right of arbitrarily fixing the amount of the taxes, were to sacrifice the property of the people to the desires of the prince. To await voluntary gifts, were at all times an indefinite and uncertain assistance, which would increase the power of the noble, and lessen that of the monarch.[142]

"The greatest attention to the exact distribution of burdens, and useful employment of the taxes raised, cannot be expected better than from those who have to bear those contributions. *The representatives of the people should therefore take into consideration the requests of the king, and the necessary corresponding sums which they should also levy upon all proprietors in the kingdom,*[143] *so that the measurement of the fruit-producing territory should form the scale of the contributions.*"

Amund could not foresee that the wants of the

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state would be immensely increased; that future generations of wealthy citizens would arise, whose treasures would not consist in estates, but in vessels, merchandize, wools, stocks of all kinds, and in their commerce. To future ages was reserved the raising of other contributions, besides the land tax, on the implements of splendour and merchandize; the charging of the importation of merchandize with duties and tolls, *and the keeping of a special legion of officers for the collection of those taxes.*

"The consent of the nobles to these contributions," continued Amund, "must certainly be obtained, for there are also citizens who are proprietors of lands, and they must likewise bear the burdens which the wants of the state require; but nothing more than their consent or their refusal is needed, and the regulation must solely depend on the people, because it not only attacks the nobles in their abundance, but the commoners in their comfort, and even in their necessities.[144] *The noble would but too soon conceive the idea of shaking the burden off his shoulders on to those of the commoners, if he preserved some power in the distribution of the taxes.*[145]

"No estate can be exempted from those general

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and constant contributions. The lands of the church must, indeed, assist to bear the burden which serves to the maintenance of the state, for their preservation depends also on its welfare. If the estates of the priests were excepted, the remainder of the citizens would succumb under the weight, for *the church is a whirlpool, which constantly swallows up, but returns nothing.*[146] Alfred, who loves religion, and, for her sake, the church, will gracefully excuse the rough sincerity of a Northman, for *even his own estates, those of the crown, must contribute their share of the taxes, for the king also obtains from the taxes the means of satisfying his wants.*"[147]

Alfred was indeed devoted to the church; he had adopted at Rome a hierarchy, which he attributed to the virtues of Leo. His love for arts induced him to bestow his friendship on the priests and monks, who at that time only preserved some remnants of ancient learning. Nations were not then taught by abuses the dangers which their liberty incurred by submitting to the church; it was willingly: and the well-disposed believed that they worshipped God in worshipping his servants. Amund's words surprised the pious Alfred, but made no impression upon him. He ascribed these too free thoughts to the opinions

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of the many unbelievers among whom Amund had sojourned.

Amund continued:—"The amount of the contributions must be fixed by the wants of the state. In time of peace I would fix it at the tenth part of the annual revenues, and in time of war at the fifth. The statistical description of the country, which Alfred's wisdom has provided, extensively facilitates the calculation and levying of these taxes.[148]

"Another task of the representatives of the people is the legislation; the laws are always chains, which fetter natural liberty; the citizen bears them willingly, because they also protect him, because he sacrifices with pleasure a portion of his freedom to society, which shelters him from the attacks of other evil-minded citizens; because all laws harmonize in one purpose, which is to increase and secure the happiness of every citizen. But by others than these the free German will not be bound. In himself alone he trusts not to part with more of his liberty than imperiously required for the general welfare.[149] *The nobles may project the laws, and so may the delegates: but they must in either case be approved of by both states of the realm, and sanctioned by the king.*[150]

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There is nothing more difficult than to make laws, because they must give an equally just direction-line for so many widely different cases, but few of which men can foresee. Accordingly, the laws must be often considered, and not too hastily adopted; they must, at least in many instances, only be given for a limited period, that their results may be carefully examined.[151] Alfred has prescribed wise laws to his Saxons; but posterity may bring forth fresh wants, and require new reformations. Since laws should be gradually established, they must not be hastily abolished; and Amund would advise *that the laws be made by the majority of voices, but not removed by less than two-thirds of the suffrages; for by nothing is the strength of laws more broken and weakened than by repeated alterations. The legislator who abolishes, or even reforms a law, discloses its needlessness to the public; but the suspicions of error fall with a like weight upon the new law. Why should not the man who erred yesterday err to day? But punishment does not invest the laws with greater power, than the inner conviction that they are also salutary to the individual bound by them.*[152]

"Nevertheless punishment there must be. The selfishness of man impels him to satisfy his passions, by committing actions against the general welfare. Men should, therefore, in their own interest arm themselves against such selfishness;

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and every citizen should be convinced that the fulfilment of his desires will but make him unhappy.[153] *The punishment must be mild but inevitable. The wisdom of the legislator consists therein that the culprit cannot escape justice; and that point once attained, double the crime will be prevented, with far less sufferings on the part of the culprit.*[154]

"Before the delegates of the people all concessions of liberties, privileges, and licenses must be brought. The king may too easily be induced, by the skilful eloquence of a favourite mediator, to give privileges injurious to other citizens.[155] As every part of the kingdom has its intercessor at the great assembly, it could not easily occur that a citizen, a village, or a town were favoured at the expense of another.

"All other business of the realm is likewise submitted to the consideration of the commoners. The king concludes peace and declares war; but as the latter throws on the shoulders of the people an immense burden, and as, on the conclusion of peace, the welfare of the realm can with the best intentions be overlooked, *a wise king will always combine to the inspirations of his own prudence the results of the considerations of his great council;* but if the functionaries of the state neglect so mode-

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rate a step, the representatives of the people possess a natural right, not to prescribe to the king his decisions, but to weigh the grounds for it, and to represent to the king their doubts, and point out to him the probable consequences of the decision of the court.[156]

"By this surveyance the people can watch over the counsellors of the king, as they will never advise evidently unjust actions, nor assist in resolutions which would be clearly disastrous to the realm.[157] The hatred of the whole nation is too strong for even the most powerful minister. It is likewise founded on the natural order that the people can make representations against all injurious measures of the court, and principally against unwise and unjust councils, as those from which the whole people would have to suffer; and how unwise must be the king who will not listen to the voice of all his people?[158]

"The general assembly must be able to deliberate on all subjects, and no power should prevent the lowest of the representatives from frankly proposing what he thinks proper for the general welfare. The voice of truth should be heard without hindrance, and even false conviction of wrong conclusions should fearlessly be delivered. For if

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the unsoundness of an opinion present an obstacle to its utterance, the powerful will soon be able to silence the speech of the weak, by declaring their arguments to be unfounded. The ill advice of the bold ignoramus will not easily pass through an assembly which a powerful people has composed of its most distinguished men, and even should the unwise counsels obtain the applause of the multitude, there exists a counter-balance in the approval of the nobles, without which no will of the commons should be carried into effect; and in case even the nobles followed the commons in their evil ways, the king possesses the supreme power of rejecting whatever he considers contrary to the general welfare."[159]

Alfred had never beheld an assembly of the people, and was only connected with that of the nobles. He was surprised at the great share in the government which his northern friend allowed the people, and objected: "Amund's virtues and wisdom, and the knowledge of many countries and many people, have enlightened him; an assembly composed of such men as my friend, would soon raise a people to be the most superior on the globe; but even were such gifts of Providence not so scarce, does Amund hope that the ignorant commoners would discover and elect such men? How

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often would not *an exterior affability, a noble birth, a liberal use of great wealth, even isolated great actions, prompted by ambition, entice the people to elect men whose exertions strive more after their own aggrandizement than that of their country?*[160]

"Will not even the ambition of these deputies tempt them to use the prejudices which are so easily spread over the people, as instruments of their personal favour? Will they not adopt the will, the inconsiderate will of the communities, as a direction to their votes, whereby to obtain the favour of their electors? *Will not thus arise such a superior power of the people as Amund would surely disapprove of himself; and, which is the worst kind of tyrannies? How has Amund prevented the inhabitants of a hundred, those of a community, or of a county, from prescribing to the deputy who represents them, the decision he is to protect? And where will the honest man be found who will oppose himself to the imprudent will of a misled people? who will support with patience the loss of their esteem and favour against the feelings of having preferred to it the general welfare?*[161]

"Will not the inexperienced commoners always endeavour to increase their power, without perceiving that they annihilate the equilibrium of

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the state, when they reduce the share of its administration allotted to the nobles and the king?[162] Did the Roman people, after once tasting the sweetness of freedom, not always thirst for power? Did they ever cease to revolt against the nobility? Did it not raise their tribunes above the consuls, and even above the dictators? Have those tribunes not done all for their own grandeur, and for the people's power? Have they not even stopped the triumphal car of the victorious when of hated lineage? Has not the eloquence of selfish tribunes brought the republic to the very brink of destruction, from which their filial veneration for Corolianus alone saved them? Did not, at that time, flatterers of the commoners, possessed of a capacity for leading the state, press those from the rudder who led them to victory? Have not the people preserved this hatred, contrary to the general good, on Scipio, and on Tullus? Have not the people been unjust while the consuls remained generous? Have they not adjudged to themselves the fertile fields near Ardea, without any right, and stained the glory of justice preserved by the nobles?"[163]

"*A man,*" said Amund, "*who takes his seat in the great council of the nation, is no longer the servant of a borough; he is counsellor of the realm; he no longer*

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represents the interest of some houses, but the business of a powerful state, and the welfare of the country. He has opportunities of viewing the reasons for wise resolutions, and he owes obedience to those who have convinced him, and not to the cries of countrymen who know of business but its superficiality, and this only from vague rumour. Those cannot advise or command who have not weighed the grounds, and the counter-grounds, who have not compared the promised advantages to the probable consequence. Never should the advantages of some villages prevent the deputies from providing for the best of the realm in general.[164]

"There certainly will always be found among a free nation some discontented. There will always exist some troublesome citizens, who disdain the *good* because it is not the *best.*[165] A general prejudice can pre-occupy the people; it can, like a contrary wind, carry the ship right against the rocks; and when the whole nation is misled, no constitution can resist the hurricane. The most terrible despot has, at Rome, in the empire of the Saracens, and in that of the peaceful Serens, not been able to resist the general discontent; and he will be the more exposed to the most cruel insurrection, because his unlimited power induces him to risk more attacks for the general good, than

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the prince whose power is limited. The latter would be stopped by the laws, by the nobles, and by the representatives of the people in the course of his hardy enterprise long before he can have gone so far as to offend and unite the whole nation against him.

"The interest of a county, the petty advantages of a borough, will, by the opposing interests of other countries and other towns, be kept in equilibrium. If the prince offends not the whole nation, he will always find friends among rational men, who soon discover what is profitable to the whole state; and were it not better to support some less perfected qualities of the prince, than venture the dangers which the threatened downfal of the sovereign family would produce? The nobles would not yield to the people the ruling power, before which their privileges would vanish. They would oppose to the cries of the populace the influence by which they acquire their wealth; their luxuries, and even their prejudices.

"If violent orators incited the people to take destructive measures, even jealousy would arm other members of the great council of the nation with such eloquence as would obtain an invincible weight from its truth. A whole nation will seldom

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agree in erroneous notions, as truth alone can produce conviction.

"I found my hopes on this ground:—the prejudice of the multitude would certainly bring sorrow upon the king, and often stop the best measures, and could moreover remove the first officer of the state from the rudder; but to overthrow the throne, the cry of the mass were too impotent, if the prince has not forfeited the general favour by real and important attacks upon liberty. The murmurs of the unreasonably discontented are certainly acts of ingratitude against a good king; but it were far more dangerous to attempt stifling the voice of the people; it is the path by which truth gains admittance to the throne: it is a warning call of Providence, which reminds the prince not to pursue the wrong course he has entered."[166]

"Amund then believes," replied Alfred, "that, according to the old constitution of the Celts, the government should be divided between the king, the nobles, and the commoners, in a manner which possesses, perhaps, not every perfection of the unlimited power of a good prince, but which would make the cases very scarce in which the king ventures to be extremely bad. Such a

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government in his opinion may possess less strength, because the powerful members of the state strive, even then, towards different directions; but it ensures the liberty of the citizens, and the peace of the state. For no other constitution unites the people so close to the government as that in which the people have, through their delegates, a share in the government."[167]

"In the Celtic states," replied the counsellor, "every inhabitant who is settled, and is bound by his property to the welfare of the nation, has a share in the legislature, and nothing is done without the consent of those who represent him. He has, himself, elected his representative, and is consequently elector of the legislator; and the whole people have chosen those in whom the power is vested. This right of election gives every citizen a dignity which even the noble must acknowledge; because the disfavour of the multitude might exclude him from the government.[168] *Every burgher's house is a castle, watched by the laws, in which even the sovereign power cannot penetrate, unless they open its doors. Such a country where the property of every citizen is sacred, where every burgher elects his legislator, must be beloved by every inhabitant, who cannot but acknowledge his privileges to be superior to those of the citizens of those*

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states, to whom neither their liberty nor their property is guaranteed, and where the government is placed in such hands that the people cannot have the slightest influence upon it. Exterior enemies would hardly find a faction in the former state, and the loud complaints would soon be changed into a general cry of war if another power were to attack the state, whose subjection would entail an enormous loss upon every citizen."[169]

Alfred smiled, and responded:—"Amund has distributed the power to the people with such liberality that he has left nothing for either the nobles or the king. And yet power, which alone is the spring wheel of all transactions, cannot be removed with speed, importance, and certainty, if another power can with one finger check that wheel and stop the movement of business. An enemy summoned to war offends the honour of the crown. He undertakes conquests by which England is placed in danger; he oppresses my allies; and in such a case there are no means to stop the consequent violences and war. But the people who have allotted me subsidies for one year can withdraw them in the following. If I should displease them, would they not either extort the most unreasonable demands from me, or the state be disarmed and fall a prey to its enemies? I con-

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clude an alliance with the Picts. I promise them subsidies against their restless neighbours, and they assist me faithfully. An orator begins to ridicule the Picts and their assistance; the people refuse to give the subsidies, by which I have hired those useful friends to give their blood in order to save that of my Saxons. The abandoned allies turn enemies, and such mischief can be caused by a mere pleasing harangue of a favourite deputy."

"This objection," replied Amund, "is difficult to answer. That which the wise Alfred fears may happen—nay, it will happen, because it arises from human nature. It was thus the discontented Romans refused to conquer for the councils, and rather let themselves be defeated than allow Appius to triumph. Alfred's apprehension is one of the consequences of liberty when not led by wisdom.

"One means remains, which is, that the deputies be not elected yearly, but represent the people for three or for seven years. The electing them for only one year seems to me, besides, prejudicial; they will be too dependent on the populace, of whom they ought to be perfectly free. *Every*

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election is likewise a fermentation, which had better not be too often repeated, for the people to remain industrious, laborious, and orderly. If the power of the representatives is secured for several years, the unchanged deputies would probably not reduce, in case of war, the fruits of the efforts of the first year, by refusing their future assistance. They would not risk the vengeance of the nation, which, as blind as it might be to the merits of its king, would implacably abhor those by whose obstinacy the dignity and safety of the state were sacrificed. The ally would likewise gain confidence in England, if the government were fixed for several years, for, the more new elections take place the more the constitution approaches towards government by the people; but the longer the great senate remains unaltered, the less influence will the populace preserve.[170]

"This duration of the assembly might, perhaps, be used in future centuries as a spring to accelerate or check the rudder of government, in proportion as it may meet with too much resistance, or be pulled along with too great velocity.

"*Human wisdom possesses no remedy to cure all evils,* to prevent every excrescence of liberty, or to give to the prince a power which does not tend

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to the oppression of the people. I nevertheless, believe, that from the danger which the prince incurs through the loss of the love of his people, he would find himself in the useful necessity of preparing to carry his sceptre with prudence—not to let it oppress the citizens too much, nor let it become too heavy in his hands. The prince will, in the first year of his reign, learn to surmount the difficulties of a government composed of jealous parties, and to proceed in such a manner that the wiser and better portion of the people may attach themselves to him. He will have nothing to fear, if he strives to become an Alfred."

The king reflected—not without sorrow—on the proposition which Amund had made. "Not yet," said the wise king, "are my people able to govern themselves. In future enlightened centuries they will be more worthy to sit at the rudder of government.[171] It will be my care to point out to them the path to those daughters of heaven —sciences, wisdom, and truth. While I govern with the power which I have inherited of my ancestors, it will be my indefatigable exertion that my people shall not repent to see so much power in my hands; and to apply that power in all ways to their use."[172]

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[Alfred not only endeavoured to fortify his kingdom with laws, embellish the cities and castles, and promote arts and sciences, but likewise to increase navigation, trade, and commerce, by discoveries of foreign countries. He found in Othar the Northman, an experienced navigator, who vastly assisted him in attaining that aim. A portion of Othar's voyages and discoveries will be found in the following book.]

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THE SIXTH BOOK.

ALFRED AND HIS NAVIGATOR.

At the extremity of Heligoland (now a well known island in the North Sea) there lived a wealthy nobleman whose name was Othar.[173] He possessed six hundred rein-deers; and, in a country where every other kind of cattle was scarce, he ploughed with his own horses and oxen. Othar had read much; his mind was enlightened by narratives of travellers, who cultivated their intelligence by comparing the manners and customs of the foreigners with their own, whereby they discovered the means of improving the latter; and were able to procure their countrymen comforts hitherto unknown, better implements, and better food. Norway was then governed by Harold with the fine hair, a ruler who subdued the petty princes of his realm, and extended the

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rights of the throne. Othar had increased his inclinations for the enjoyment of the general advantages of human nature, by the knowledge of the old Scalds, who sang to a valiant nation the advantages of liberty.

Othar, feeling an irresistable wish to travel and discover distant lands, embarked, and arrived at Alfred's court as the latter was occupied in raising a naval power. The king received with pleasure a man whom necessity forced to instruct himself in the art of navigation.

Northmanland had not (besides its rein-deers and game) been gifted by nature with any other means of nourishing its inhabitants than the sea. Between the cliffs of a shore, broken down in fearful precipices, between the rocky isles lying before the land, the sea is filled with an inexhaustible multitude of animals, which the courageous inhabitants pursue through all the dangers of winds and ice, and which supply their wants. Food, wherewith in milder climates grateful earth rewards the labour of the ploughman, must be fetched by the hardened Northmen from foreign lands, and brought to their huts by long sea voyages; but every Northman is a fisherman and a navigator. Hence the reason that the inhabitants of the Scandina-

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vian shores could easily molest with numerous fleets those of the more fertile countries.

Othar was presented to the king:—"Alfred," said the Northman, "deserves, from his virtues, that the globe should offer him new countries which no other mortal ever has navigated. I hope to discover countries which will increase England's wealth, where a great number of navigators will find rich cargoes for their vessels, and by which the Saxons will learn to maintain the dominion of the seas. I live in regions over which in summer the sun never sets, rising after a short circulation in the boundaries of the horizon; the seas nourish, in those heights, monstrous fishes, compared to which the elephant is but a small animal. Nevertheless, they serve as booty to man; and one of those fishes is of the value of one hundred pounds of silver. My Northmen know how to conquer these monsters; to them it is mere play to pursue these giants on the seas with their javelins. On the cliffs of these seas are to be found the sea-horse, whose teeth are more esteemed than ivory; and in the high seas the inestimable unicorn, which produces an antidote confidentially given by physicians against every kind of poison.

"But Othar has greater designs; he has be-

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longed to men, whom the desire for booty, or the tempestuous winds, drove into new seas. Northland does not reach the extreme angle of the world; it is bounded by the ocean, and in the East flows an immeasurable sea, of which no mortal knows the limits, which reaches fertile Nippon and industrious Cathay. Immense would the fortunes of the Saxons be, and unmeasurable Alfred's glory, could I succeed in discovering in these rich countries the road through which to bring those treasures into the British islands, which enrich so many nations before they find their way into Europe. The silk garments of queens, the finest steel, the noblest copper, the costliest metals, are found in those distant realms; and that people will occupy the highest rank among all nations, who has first discovered the roads of the sea, and who will appropriate to themselves by navigation the riches of that unknown world.

"Othar requests two ships, which he will man with experienced sailors, and provisions for twelve months. He will die or discover new realms for the king."[174]

Alfred gladly accepted the proposition. Two ships manned with Northern sailors left for

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Heligoland's shores; and Othar steered his vessels directly towards the angle of the earth. He perceived the extreme end of the then known world. The sea opened in an immense distance towards the east, and the land retired before him towards the south. Othar advanced farther to the north than any mortal had done before him. The sea was open, and the dangers he had to surmount were only trifles to his courage. He captured unicorns, and brought with him a whole cargo of that inestimable antidote; but as he had just rounded the point of the globe, beyond which it again sinks to the south, he was overtaken by a heavy gale from the east. Vainly would the bold Othar resist. He was driven on a shore where he found a secure harbour, warm sources, and green meadows.

The inhabitants of those shores were not unlike the Finlanders, among whom Othar had formerly lived. Little and uncouthly shaped, but prepared to bear all the burthens of life, indefatigable in the most difficult tasks; they attacked with bad weapons, and without the assistance of iron, the fearful whale, which served them for food, and whose bones formed the skeleton of their huts. They sought beneath the ice the coy seal, and slew him with javelins, mounted with bones. Fish was

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their corn, their whole nutriment; for the earth produced nothing that man could subsist upon. The country was covered with rocks, and filled in the interior with lofty snow-capped mountains. Never did a tree shoot forth, nor did the rocky soil produce a single fruit.

Othar's ships had sustained great injury in the storm; their repair required several weeks. He acquired a knowledge of the people who inhabited the newly discovered shore. He assisted the savages in their fishery, presented them with iron weapons, and instructed them in fastening harpoons to long ropes, which they flung in the whale. By this rope the whale draws his pursurers along with a speed no storm can imitate, until he becomes weakened by loss of blood.

Othar taught them the value of the sea-horse teeth, and the means of subduing it. He let them taste of bread, and promised them to return in the following year with the production of the arts of civilized nations, and to barter with them for the booty of the whale and seal.

In spite of Othar's love for liberty, he had never before seen a country without a ruler. The whole north was governed by petty princes,

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who themselves venerate the kings of Upsal, Lethra, and Northmanland. The inhabitants of the northern coasts obeyed magistrates and laws; all paid taxes to the state, and sacrificed to it a portion of their liberty.

Here, in the western north, Othar found no trace of subjection; *no man raised above another, no law, no punishment, and no reward.* Every father is master of his children; but the partner of his hut, who lives near him under one roof, requires no obedience from him, and shows him, in return, no subjection, but lives with him, like brothers in equality, around the common lamp. Twenty huts are dug in the earth, close to each other, near a plentiful bay; fifty individuals live in these huts, and not a single one gives or accepts the slightest order; not one living near the fishful bay acquires more superiority among his co-citizens than that which inevitably follows good advice. The savages assemble themselves in common huts, in small villages; and, in company, man large boats, in which they journey from one bay to another more plentiful. They combine all their strength to build such a boat; they conclude a bond against the whale, wage against him a common war, and share the booty; but with all these alliances, not one of the inhabitants owes the least subjection to the other.[175]

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Othar was desirous of learning what the effects of this lawlessness could be, if the men were less amiable, or their situation the worse for it. He found but little difference between the freest of men, the inhabitants of the north western coast, and the most civilized Europeans. Like in the European, good was here mixed with evil. The savages lived as peaceably as those watched by the wrath of an avenging law.

But seldom would one of the savages injure, or beat another, like himself. Many lived indifferently, but amicably, together in one hut. At the division of the common spoils there seldom arises a dispute; even sensual love, which awakens in animals the most bloody conflicts, disturbed not the phlegm of these solitary Northmen.[176]

They are, indeed, extremely cold towards each other in the duties of humanity. A child, whose mother died, must inevitably perish, as no other woman will take care of the miserable being.[177] They do not, in case of illness, enjoy those services of their fellow-creatures which civilized nations render each other. As the repeated changes of their habitations makes a burden of the sick to the healthy;—as no avenger of the violated laws threatens the criminal, a dispute often leads to

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murder. The furious savage, who meets his enemy alone on the solitary sea, has at times overturned his boat, or secretly hurled him from the cliffs into the deep abyss. But such crimes are not frequent, and not more so than with those nations who live under the strongest discipline of religion, and the punishment of society.

Marriages are just as constant and harmonizing as with other nations.[178] Unfertility is alone despised, because the children, and principally the sons, are the sole assistance which the parents can hope for in old age, in countries where men are not sufficiently united to assist one another in case of need.

The sense of honour is as powerful as with the civilized northern nations. It extends even on the glory acquired by wit, after which these savages, likewise, strive in their needy life. But still more powerful is covetousness. Superfluity forms here the only difference which raises one man above another.[179] But these savages are rather more to be excused than civilized nations. Their subsistence is dependant on thousands of dangers and accidents, and even their superfluity exist only in victuals, which may suddenly become a necessity. The want of living socially may be

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the reason which prevented these savages from taming animals. Nature gave them reindeers, but no one knew how to train them to obedience, and to live in friendship with man: these men thus lost a surer subsistence than that which depends on the waves and winds.

Othar at length convinced himself, that in a perfectly desert country, where there is superfluous room for the small population, where the sea is open to all, and furnishes subsistence for all, where there are neither acres nor meadows, no property but that under the immediate surveyance of its possessor; that, in fine, in a cold country, where all desires, even the most powerful, (that of love,) are moderate, men can live without authority; that also the common wants and advantages can lead such uniform men to a social living, and that the vices will not break out with them in greater crimes, than with those who are under princes and laws, because the desires are, with the former, less powerful, making limited punishment less necessary.

Othar's ships were again prepared and equipped ready to support the dangers of the sea. A favourable north-east breeze guided the hardy mariner round the southern point of the frozen

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coast. The earth now inclined towards the south; a large bay lay before them; a mighty river flowed through different mouths into the sea, and served for a secure harbour. The northmen found those shores, although farther north than those of the savages, inhabited with civilized men. The Biarmians had a king and holy rites; they lived in warm and comfortable houses, and found in fishery, hunting their numerous herds, and in the fruits of the earth, sufficient nourishment. The people were not unlike the Finlanders of Othar, who acknowledged the use of social living. The northern cold, the long winters, the destructive winds ruled here like by the north-western savages; but the united forces of man had here alleviated the severity of the climate. Under their hands the earth had become fertile; they were acquainted with the use of implements, and assisted one another in preparing and building their houses. Want did not compel them to wander through the deserted country; they had gardens and fields; and exchanged their superfluities against the more useful merchandizes of southern nations. They were not exposed to famine, which often swept away herds of savages, from unfavourable weather. What had been impossible for one man was achieved by the united force of the mass. The sciences of civilized nations cast a few

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of their rays into these distant regions, where a Supreme Being was acknowledged and venerated.

Othar found that religion enforces the bonds of humanity, and binds us to duties towards our brethren, which the savage knows nothing of; that we feel more tender compassion, alleviate with greater zeal the wants and sufferings of others; and finally, that unsociable men do not advance in arts or sciences, that they neither improve nor perfect anything; but that, on the contrary, civilized people daily invent more means to alleviate the burden of life, and increase the agreeable impressions; that these people grow and augment, while the savages remain in eternal childhood.

Othar again unfurled his sails, and a favourable breeze from the south-west guided him to the northern angle of the earth. He passed by an island far beyond the countries inhabited by men, eastward of a great isle perpetually covered with ice, where the little that nature produces only nourished animals. The small island was traversed by deep fords, and around it the sea swarmed with whales. Othar promised himself inexhaustible treasures in those never-before navigated regions, (Spitzbergen,) and to recompense the liberality of the Saxons with them.

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His resolution to fulfil Alfred's wishes was unshakable, namely, to discover the route to Cathay and Nippon, realms of whose extent and wealth the fame had already reached Europe. He passed, on a clear day, by a small island, from which he perceived some smoke arising. "Even here, then," said Othar, "so near the summit of the world, inhabit men!" and soon saw some strangers, clothed in furs, walking on the shore, and requesting assistance by signs and praying gestures.

The generous Othar could not see men suffering without taking part in their misfortunes. He embarked in a skiff, and extended his hand, in token of friendship, to the head man of these forsaken beings. They were Biarmians, and their language was not quite unknown to Othar: they solicited, in the name of the general right of humanity, to be delivered from their loneliness. Othar was at once willing to save them; but they requested first to enter a hut, in which they had lived for six long years.

The hut was sunk in a cavity, and erected of timber washed away by the waves from distant forests, and which kind nature had directed to those inhospitable shores. The apertures were

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stopped with moss. A fire burned on the solitary hearth, which was never extinguished. The wealth of these unhappy men was preserved in the huts. Hides of bears, valuable foxes, and reindeers, grease of all these animals, thread, ropes, and tissue of the sinews of bears, and some earthern pots were their treasures. The Biarmians treated their host with meat, and the Northmen once more tasted the long-forgotten juice of the barley.

After dinner, the few men brought their treasures and weapons on board the vessels, and a western breeze favoured their voyage to the extremity of the east. To cheer the solitude of the sea, Othar begged of the strangers to narrate to him their history.

"We are fishermen," said the eldest of the Biarmians, "and sailed in search of whales; and near this isle were enclosed by the ice. We stepped on shore, and sought some cavern wherein to secure ourselves against the killing cold; in this fearful solitude we saw nothing but cliffs, split by the frost, and the broken pieces fell with fearful crashes into the sea; deserted fields, without trees or plants; hills covered with snow, and a desert, abandoned by all beings, was our realm. We had brought a little iron and some weapons

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with us from the ships, and without difficulty killed a reindeer, for the inhabitants of that shore had never before beheld men, and had not learned to fly from his ambushes. Night came on, and was short, for during whole months the sun never forsook us; but a strong hurricane raged during the night on the sea, and on the morning the ice was dispersed; but our ships, our only means of safety, had been cast away, and were irrecoverably lost.

"We saw ourselves enclosed in a prison, surrounded by immense seas. We were far from all assistance, and almost devoid of means of averting the cravings of hunger, the frost, and the fury of the winds; still our very wants gave us courage. The reindeer which we had killed nourished us for some days; we drank the melted snow, and found a stock of stranded wood washed on shore by the sea, which was sometimes increased by the wrecks of ships. A single axe and a knife were all our tools. We worked indefatigably in constructing a hut, before the inexorable winter should surprise us. By rapidly turning a piece of wood, we kindled a fire, which we never allowed to go out. Of a few nails which we found in the wrecks of the ships, we forged, on hard stones, a hammer and two irons, with which we armed two spears. Of

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a root likewise presented us by the sea, we made a bow, and of the nails, iron points for the arrows.

A white bear, the tyrant of this island, who fed upon what he plundered from the reindeers, attacked us; but we were prepared for war, and killed the cruel animal with our spears. Of his veins we spun threads, and they furnished us with strings for our bows, ropes for different uses, and thread, wherewith we prepared our clothes from the furs of the slayed animals.

"The bow which slayed in the distance gave us power over the animals, which had before been the sole inhabitants of the island. We killed the bears, shot a great number of foxes, and as many reindeer as we needed for our nurture. With angles, to which we fastened small morsels of meat, we easily deceived the fish, and increased our provisions. We found clay, whereof we manufactured some earthern vessels, wherein we could cook, and formed a lamp, which we nourished with bears' grease, and by which we enlightened the darkness of the perpetual nights during the very long winters. The wicks were made of some ends of rope, which we found, from time to time, on wrecks. A single low-growing herb, uniting good taste to wholesomeness, served as a change for our meals.

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"Six times we lived to see the perpetual day of the summer; six times, likewise, we endured the terrible nights, which for many months cover these sad fields. The snow which buried our hut, the insupportable cold of the latter winter months, were alleviated by the hut and the fire, which we preserved. The long hours were shortened by toilsome labours, in which we advanced so far as to make needles out of nails.

"These occupations raised our spirits in the dull hours, which we could not avoid. Alas! thought I, we must die, and happy will those be who die first, who will hear the consoling voice of his friends, and who can hope, in his last moments, for their assistance, and have his eyes closed by friendly hands. But what will be the fate of the survivor! who will remain without a friend, without assistance; who cannot acquire or enjoy meals, and cannot quench the greatest want of man—thirst; who will faint alone, and putrify alive.

"We were threatened to lose our most necessary tools. The axe, on which depended our provisions of wood, whereby we protected ourselves from the cold, was used to the hilt; of an only knife, nothing remained, and these losses were

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irreparable. But He who created man can also save him," said the moral Biarmian, "and his kindness has led others, in whom he has entrusted our safety, from the extreme west to our shores."[180]

Othar testified his joy at being found worthy of terminating such undeserved misfortunes. "What," said he, musingly, "would man be without art; for social life were then impossible? A little iron, produced by the combined labour of a miner, a collier, a potter, a mason, a carpenter, and innumerable other artisans, has saved the life of those Biarmians. In social life, they learned how to form the iron into tools, the clay into vessels, the thread into ropes, and the hides into clothes.

"Unhappy were man, indeed, without sociality. The human race would be extinguished in a few years; for children, longer than any animal, remain powerless, and unable to procure themselves the necessaries of life, were it not for the insurmountable inclination to society which unites the father and mother to nurse tenderly the new being, who, in return, causes them only pain and sorrow, and prompts them to sacrifice to their children their ambition, their quietness, their desires, their leisure, and even their aversion for pain."[181]

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Othar sailed, for a while, towards the east with a favourable breeze; but as the sun entered the sign of the Virgin, the long days declined, and the winds became stronger. A heavy mist covered the sea, and vast floating islands of ice surrounded the ship. The robust Northmen feared not death, if it encountered them in the shape of a sword or a spear; but they knew that on the frozen northern coast every harbour would be a grave; that no land, for an immense distance, produced the necessaries of life; that their vessel could not resist the shocks of these floating masses of ice—that it was very uncertain whether any part of the deserted regions were at all inhabited—that a miserable death, hunger, and frost, awaited them—and that no courage could resist such evils.

Our hero surrendered unwillingly; but the navigation was no longer safe, from the dense atmosphere; and they risked at every moment to be shattered to pieces against some imperceptible cliff, or some unavoidable island. Their provisions likewise grew slack, and the hope of a future subsistence could only be realized in distant southern regions. Othar was obliged to yield to the hard necessity, and to shift his rudder. He brought the grateful Biarmians back to their native shores, loaded his vessel with the scarce furs and with

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the booty of the northern sea animals, and arrived in the beginning of the winter, after having surmounted the greatest dangers, at Heligoland. He wintered with his nation, who heard with surprise the narrative of the companions of the hero, who had travelled over so many never-before navigated seas, who had seen men of other shapes and foreign manners, and who had, in fine, ventured to approach nearer to the angular star than any mortal could ever have hoped.

In the following spring Othar returned to England, and brought to the king the presents of the north, the teeth of the sea-horse, the costly furs given to them by the Biarmians and Obdorians, the weapons of the highly estimated unicorn, and the bones of the whales they had killed.

Alfred listened with pleasure to the adventures of his navigator, and the narrative of the men abandoned to nature alone. He was too kind to expose his courageous seamen to the certain dangers of destruction, by farther voyages to the extreme north, and therefore gave to the intrepid Othar another commission, but one much easier to execute.

The Northman was this time to navigate the

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eastern seas, which stretch from the great ocean, between Scandinavia and Germany, far to the east. He sailed with a well equipped vessel through the sound which separates the Danish isles from the kingdom of the Goths, and navigated a river which takes its source from the old mother country of the Saxons. The whole nation had embarked for the milder shores of Britain, and the deserted country was now inhabited by the Danes. Othar advanced to the mouth of the Vistula, and to the country whence the amber (washed by the sea on its shores) is exported to the other parts of the world. He took in his ship a quantity of this fragrant rosin, which served as ornaments for women. He visited Ehstland, a country of nobles and slaves; great forests covered the whole country, only a few isolated parts being cleared; every Sarmatian nobleman held there his court, around which lived his slaves, in miserable huts, who cultivated his lands, and expected their daily subsistence from him on whom depended their lives, and even the honour of their wives.

The knight knew no other happiness than war, or its imitation—hunting. He searched in the thickest of the woods the wild bull, and aroused the bear in his winter cavern. Neither arts, sciences, nor commerce, had yet penetrated into

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this seat of wild nature. That his master might live in idleness, the miserable peasant was daily forced to toil, by hard-hearted stewards, at labour of which he could hope nothing for himself, and which only the whip of the inexorable driver could enforce.

The constant oppression under which these miserable beings succumbed, the bad recompense for their labour, the contempt which rather increased than lightened good services, made these servants angry, and enemies of their master. They became idle, because they worked not for themselves; malicious, because they were forced to conceal their ill-will; thievish, because they lacked the most common necessaries of life; and unchaste, because no virgin remained unstained, and dared not resist the insolent requests of the debauched nobles. It was a visible effect of the servility of the oppressed, that they no longer practised any virtues, and that their souls were abased to a level with those of the brutes. The greatest part of the country was a desert, and even the fields of the Sarmatian nobles received no care of the unwilling ploughman to fertilize them. A part of the needless forests were yearly burned down, and some seeds sown in the warmed earth, the growth of which was favoured by the ash; and a

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few harvests were followed by perpetual unfertility. Like the beasts which man nourishes for his comfort, the peasant received a common bread and a disgusting beverage, which necessity alone could make endurable. Life was a burden, and death he looked upon as a salvation. Whole and immense realms were placed under the iron rule of a few nobles.

None of these vast countries possessed any power of their own; but became the booty of every prince, obeyed by his subjects. No bond united the powerful nobles to general purposes. None of them would be commanded by another. None would sacrifice the smallest part of his fortune or liberty to the general welfare. Single, they were subdued without difficulty; their servile subjects having nothing to hope of their hard masters, and nothing to lose by their destruction.[182]

Othar advanced to the end of the eastern seas, and to the mouth of a river, on which stood isolated islands, covered with shrubs and game; a place designed in the book of fate for a town, which should rise after many years to such grandeur, that hundreds of nations should obey its sway; and whose governors should erect an immense realm, extending from the land of the

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Serens to the limits of Ehstland. Othar returned, and brought with him the treasures of these distant countries: hides of the innumerable game, the collected amber, and the honey of the wild bees, which in vain often give to man the model of a happy industry.

Alfred marked with interest the situation of the realm over which Wodan, his ancestor, had governed, and where he had stepped from the throne to the altar; he listened attentively to the description of the evil use which man makes of the gifts of nature, when no wise laws unite their force towards a social direction. He resolved to use his influence to break their chains, which abased even their souls, and by which they lost the great advantages which should make them like unto God. He recompensed Othar royally, and gave him the command of ten ships of war, already equipped.

[We perceive that the purpose of Othar's voyages, commanded by Alfred, was not merely to discover foreign lands to augment England's wealth by importation of goods, but also to study the manners, customs, and legislation of other nations; and to compare them with each other, and with those then existing in England. The

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result of which, like that of his conference with Amund, was that Alfred's government was the most enlightened of his time, and contained the future British legislation and constitution. The contents of the fifth and sixth book will already have prepared the reader for the following conclusion—describing briefly the general principles of all political constitutions.]

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CONCLUSION.

ALL parts of the universe hold a mutual relation to each other; and in the whole empire of finite nature nothing exists for itself alone. The universe stands in such a relation to its first cause, that it could not subsist a moment by itself. It belongs to us to study the mutual relation of beings, which are not our work, but the productions of Nature; and the result of this study constitutes our *law*. The knowledge of this informs us how we may be able to turn everything which exists to our advantage. In nothing, indeed, is man more distinguished from the brutes than in the faculty of acquiring this knowledge; he possesses no other claim to the dominion of the world, but by his superior intellect alone he holds it in subjection. Moreover, as man alone is endowed with the power of elevating himself in communion with the Author of all things, he stands, with respect to all subordinate beings, in

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the situation of those (if we may venture to use the expression) who in monarchical governments have the exclusive privilege of entering into the presence of the sovereign.

The *law of nature* is the result of our relations to the visible world, and especially to all beings endowed with feeling. The generality of men have comprehended indeed, under this term, (fancying that they are under no obligations of duty, except towards their equals,) only that which, after abstracting all personal and local connections, every man owes to his fellow-creatures; but this part of the natural law does not embrace its whole extent, although it is obviously the most interesting to us.[183]

Since all men do not possess the faculties and industry needful for sifting to the bottom these first principles, and since it cannot be expected, from the violence of human passions, that among the various points of view in which each affair may be contemplated, men will always adopt the most generally beneficial result, as the rule of their conduct; positive regulations were required, in order to support the natural law with a sufficient power, and from time to time with effective measures, against the encroachment of ignorance

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and self-interest. An endless variety of circumstances soon diversified these regulations, and greatly multiplied them, by giving rise to an infinite diversity of relations. Moreover, violent changes took place, which quickly gave to human society a new form, different from its primitive and simple state, and from the spirit and design of its first institutions: this was a source of more complex relations, which required new precepts.

The increasing number of these obtained, according to the objects with which they were conversant, the designation of civil, political, public, and ecclesiastical law. The minutest affairs were regulated by positive laws, since human passions extends to all, and requires, in every conjuncture, a prescribed and distinct limitation. Yet the innumerable multitude of ordinances are capable of being reduced to a few general principles; it is only necessary to point out the particular applications, in order to confute the sophistry of those who will not embrace the universal scheme.

In some instances the laws have either been proposed, or at least ratified, in popular assemblies; in others, the nation has submitted silently to the commands which one or more individuals

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(who by virtue or power have raised themselves to be rulers or lords) have issued, under the character of representatives, or protectors of the people. One man, or a body of men, have also administered the executive power. The variations thus produced constitute great diversities in the forms of government. *Monarchy* is that government in which a single person rules, but is subject to limitation by the laws, over which a middle power presides, and watches for their conservation. The authority of the latter may flow from the splendour of a long succession of dignified ancestors, or from their destination to the defence of their country, or from their qualifications as possessors of land; they are termed, accordingly the noble, the patrician order, or the parliament. In other instances, superior knowledge in divine and human affairs imparts the privilege, as among the ancient Gauls to the Druids, and for a long period to the tribe of Levi among the Hebrews. *Despotism*, which knows no law, but the arbitrary will of one man, is a corruption or disorganization of monarchy.

Aristocracy is the government of ancient families, and of those who are chosen by them into the senate. This assembly either consists, as was at Venice, of the whole body to whom their birth-

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right gives a share in the government, or it is a select number chosen out of them, as in several Swiss cantons. One branch of this form of administration is *Timocracy*, or that constitution, in which the laws define a certain property, the possessors of which, alone, are capable of holding offices. This system, and aristocracy in general, degenerate into *Oligarchy*, that is, into a form of government in which the chief power, by the laws, or by descent, or accident, is confined to a very small number of men.

Democracy denotes, according to the old signification of the word, that system of government in which all the citizens assembled partake in the supreme power. When all the landholders, though not citizens, join with the latter in the exercise of their high privileges, *Ochlocracy* prevails. This name is also given to that condition of the democratic form, in which, in consequence of bad laws or the violent commotions, the power, which properly belonged to the people, has been transferred to the populace.

The best form of government is that which, avoiding the above-mentioned excesses, combines the decisive vigour of monarchy with the mature wisdom of a senate, and with the animating im-

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pression of democracy. But it is rarely that circumstances allow that the sagacity of a lawgiver has conferred on his nation that good fortune; and when it has happened to be obtained, violence and intrigue have seldom conceded to it a long duration in a state of purity. Sparta, Rome, and some later republics, but particularly England, have sought more or less to attain this ideal standard of perfection; but governments of the simple form have always been more numerous and more permanent.

At the same time it very seldom happens that we find a form of government wholly unmixed. Religion and prevailing opinions impose salutary restraints upon despotism; in monarchies it is not easy for the ruler, without one of these resources, to govern the nobles according to his wishes. An aristocracy is generally indulgent to the people; it sometimes allows them a participation in the most important conclusions; or in the election to certain high offices of state. In like manner democratic governments are, for the most part, held in check by the influence of a perpetual council, which prepares affairs for the deliberation of the popular assembly. By far the most common form of government is the oligarchical. How can the sovereign exercise his power, let him be as

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anxious as he may to govern for himself, without confiding on many occasions in the information and proposals of his ministers? A few party leaders govern the senate and the popular assembly. The ablest, the most eloquent, or the richest, will everywhere take the lead. The essential difference between the forms of government consists in the various pursuits to which a man must direct his endeavours, in order to become powerful in each. Another important consideration relates to the greater or more limited sphere, in which the ruler can exert his arbitrary will.

With respect to the former circumstance, there are scarcely any governments in which the ambition of men is directed altogether as it ought to be; under a wise prince those obtain power who deserved it; under a sovereign of an opposite character, those are successful who possess the greatest skill in the arts of a court. Family influence decides, for the most part, in aristocracies.

With the multitude, eloquence and corruption often obtain the victory over real merit. The natural desire of self-preservation does not prevent the abuse of power; human passions, full of resources, provide for all contingencies; kings have surrounded themselves with standing armies,

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against whose accurate tactics, when no conjecture of circumstances rouses whole nations to the contest, nothing can prevail. The party leaders know how to put their private wishes into the mouths of the people, and thus to avoid all responsibility; moreover, the depraved crowd who receive bribes, and do anything for the permission of licentiousness, would sufficiently protect them. An aristocracy is extremely vigilant over the first and scarcely discernible movements: it leaves everything else to its fate, and is willing to impede even the prosperity of a multitude, which is formidable to it.

With all this, it appears wonderful that the forms of human society could be maintained in the midst of such various corruptions. But the greater number of men are neither firmly bent on good nor on evil; there are few who pursue only one of the two, and that one with all their might; and these, moreover, must be favoured by circumstances, in order to carry their endeavours into effect. Certain attempts are only practicable in particular times; and this forms the distinguishing character of ages, the regulation of which depends on a higher power.

It is fortunate that even imperfect modes of

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government have always a certain tendency to order; their founders have surrounded them with a multitude of forms, which always serve as a barrier against great calamities, and which impart to the course of affairs a certain regularity, for which the multitude acquire a sort of veneration. The more forms there are, the fewer commotions happen. So great is their authority, that the conquerors of Rome and China have been obliged to adopt the laws of the conquered countries.

Herein consist also the advantages of the Oriental and other ancient lawgivers: they considered as much the nature of men as the circumstances of their particular subjects; our laws, for the most part, only concern themselves with public affairs. That simplicity of manners, temperance, industry, constancy, those military virtues, which among us each individual must enjoin himself, became among the ancients matter of prescriptive obligation.

In fact, it is only through the influence of manners that society can be maintained; the laws may form them, but men must give assistance to the laws by their own endeavours. *Everything will go well when men shall declaim less on their share in the supreme power, and each individual shall*

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seek to acquire so much the more authority over himself. Let every one aim at attaining a correct estimate of things; for by this means his desires will be very much moderated. Let alterations in the form of government be left to the operation of time, which gives to every people the constitution of which it is susceptible at each particular period, and a different one when it becomes mature for the change.

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APPENDIX.

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NOTES, COMMENTARIES,

AND

EXTRACTS FROM DOCUMENTS.

BOOK I.

1. *Anglo-Saxons in England.*

THE limited space of this little work has not allowed us to give more than some short outlines of the history of the Anglo-Saxons, from the period of their landing in England till the reign of Ethelred, (who died A.D. 873,) third son of Ethelwolf, and grandson of Egbert, from which epoch Albert Von Haller begins his narrative of the history of Alfred, which we have given nearly without alteration. More details concerning the Anglo-Saxons in England will be found in well-known works on English history, and principally in Kemble's new work, entitled "The Anglo-Saxons in England," in "Six Old English Chronicles," and in Dr. Giles' "Alfred the Great."

2. *Genealogy of Alfred.*

Alfred was the fourth son of Ethelwolf, and grandson of Egbert, through whom his pedigree ascended to Woden, and from thence upwards, through twenty-three generations, to Adam. This pedigree, according to Asser, Florence, and Simeon, is as follows: Adam, Seth, Enos, Cainan, Mahalecl, Enoch, Methusalem, Lamech, Noah, Shem, Bedwig, Huala, Hathra, Itermod, Heremod, Sceldwea, Beaw, Cætwa, Geata, Fingodwolf, Frithwolf, Frealaf, Frithowalde, Woden, Beldeg, Brond, Gewis, Elesa, Cerdic, Creoda, Cynric, Ceaulin, Cuthwine, Cutha, Ceolwalde, Coenred, Ingild, brother of Ine, Eoppa, Eafa, Elmund, Egbert, Ethelwolf. The mother of Alfred was named Osburga, a religious woman, noble both by birth and by nature; she was daughter of Oslac, the famous butler of King Ethelwulf, which Oslac was a Goth by nation, descended from the Goths and Jutes, of the seed,

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namely, of Stuf and Whitgar, two brothers and counts; who, having received possession of the Isle of Wight from their uncle, King Cerdic, and his son Cynric, their cousin, slew the few British inhabitants whom they could find in that island, at a place called Gwihtgaraburgh,* for the other inhabitants of the island had either been slain or escaped into exile.—But our readers "*doivent être un peu en garde contre les historiens qui remontent à la tour de Babel et au deluge.*"

3. *Ragnar Lodebrok.*

Our author terms the Scandinavians also *Normans*, and but seldom *Danes*, perhaps by reason of the more poetical sound in the German language of the word *Normans*. Most of the English historians have adopted the name of *Danes*, probably to distinguish them from the Normans, who invaded England under William the Conqueror. We have no reason for altering the expression used by our German author, as it has not yet been proved that the Scandinavian invaders were merely composed of Danes. But to avoid any confusion in our narrative, between the latter Normans and those in Alfred's time, we have adopted the name, *Northmen*, as a general term for the northern invaders.

Ragnar, or Regner Lodebrok, one of their heroes (mentioned in p. 4.) was made prisoner by Ella, King of Northumberland, and the unhappy captive was placed *in a dungeon, where he was slowly stung to death by snakes.* When the news of Regner's death reached Denmark, his sons, two of whom were Hingua and Ubba, swore to avenge him. The bards of Scandinavia tuned their harps to the praises of the hero: his actions were chaunted throughout the islands of the north, and the death-song of Regner Lodbroc, a curious remnant of Scandinavian verse, which has come down to our own times, animated his countrymen to battle and to vengeance. This and other heroes have been differently named by various authors, we can therefore not answer for the accuracy of either name, the more so since one name, as Lodbroc, is spelt in several different manners in one work.

4. *Death of Edmund, King of the East-Angles.*

"In the year of our Lord's incarnation, 870, which was the twenty-second of King Alfred's life, the above-named

* Carisbrooke, as may be conjectured from the name, which is a combination of Wight and Caraburgh.

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army of Pagans passed through Mercia into East-Anglia, and wintered at Thetford.

"In the same year Edmund, King of the East-Angles, fought most fiercely against them; but, lamentable to say, the Pagans triumphed, Edmund was slain in the battle, and the enemy reduced all that country to subjection."—ASSER.

5. *Battle of Reading.*

This battle is described by Asser as follows:—"In the year of our Lord's incarnation, 871, which was the twenty-third of King Alfred's life, the Pagan army, of hateful memory, left the East-Angles, and entering the kingdom of the West-Saxons, came to the royal city, called Reading, situated on the south bank of the Thames, in the district called Berkshire; and there, on the third day after their arrival, their earls, with great part of the army, scoured the country for plunder, while the others made a rampart between the rivers Thames and Kennet, on the right side of the same royal city. They were encountered by Ethelwulf, Earl of Berkshire, with his men, at a place called Englefield;* both sides fought bravely, and made long resistance. At length one of the Pagan earls was slain, and the greater part of the army destroyed; upon which the rest saved themselves by flight, and the Christians gained the victory.

"Four days afterwards Ethelred, King of the West-Saxons, and his brother Alfred, united their forces and marched to Reading, where, on their arrival, they cut to pieces the Pagans whom they found outside the fortification. But the Pagans, nevertheless, sallied out from the gates, and a long and fierce engagement ensued. At last, grief to say, the Christians fled, the Pagans obtained the victory, and the aforesaid Earl Ethelwulf was among the slain.

"Roused by this calamity, the Christians, in shame and indignation, within four days assembled all their forces, and again encountered the Pagan army at a place called Ashdune,† which means the 'Hill of the Ash.' The Pagans had divided themselves into two bodies, and began to prepare defences, for they had two kings and many earls, so they gave the middle part of the army to the two kings, and the other part to all their earls; which the Christians perceiving, divided their army also into two troops, and also began to construct defences. But Alfred, as we have been told by those who were present, and would not tell an untruth,

* Englefield Green is about four miles from Windsor.
† Aston, in Berkshire.

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marched up promptly with his men to give them battle; for King Ethelred remained a long time in his tent in prayer, hearing the mass, and said that he would not leave it till the priest had done, or abandon the divine protection for that of men. And he did so too, which afterwards availed him much with the Almighty, as we shall declare more fully in the sequel.

"Now the Christians had determined that King Ethelred, with his men, should attack the two Pagan kings, but that his brother Alfred, with his troops, should take the chance of war against the two earls. Things being so arranged, the king remained a long time in prayer, and the Pagans came up rapidly to fight. Then Alfred, though possessing a subordinate authority, could no longer support the troops of the enemy, unless he retreated, or charged upon them without waiting for his brother. At length he bravely led his troops against the hostile army, as they had before arranged, but without awaiting his brother's arrival; for he relied in the divine counsels, and forming his men into a dense phalanx, marched on at once to meet the foe.

"But here I must inform those who are ignorant of the fact, that the field of battle was not equally advantageous to both parties. The Pagans occupied the higher ground, and the Christians came up from below. There was also a single thorn-tree, of stunted growth, but we have ourselves never seen it. Around this tree the opposing armies came together with loud shouts from all sides, the one party to pursue their wicked course, the other to fight for their lives, their dearest ties, and their country. And when both armies had fought long and bravely, at last the Pagans, by the divine judgment, were no longer able to bear the attacks of the Christians, and having lost great part of their army, took to a disgraceful flight. One of their two kings and five earls were there slain, together with many thousand Pagans, who fell on all sides, covering with their bodies the whole plain of Ashdune.

"There fell in that battle King Bagsac, Earl Sidrac the elder, and Earl Sidrac the younger, Earl Osbern, Earl Frene, and Earl Harold; and the whole Pagan army pursued its flight, not only until night but until the next day, even until they reached the stronghold from which they had sallied. The Christians followed, slaying all they could reach, until it became dark.

"After fourteen days had elapsed, King Ethelred, with his brother Alfred, again joined their forces and marched to

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Basing to fight with the Pagans. The enemy came together from all quarters, and after a long contest gained the victory. After this battle, another army came from beyond the sea, and joined them." To this we only have to add, that "*il faut se defier de ceux qui particularisent toute l'histoire, qui vous donnent audacieusement la relation exacte de toutes les batailles dont les generaux eux memes auraient eu peutêtre bien de la peine a rendre compte à l'époque on les batailles out eu lieu.*"

6. *Alfred's Brethren.*

Ethelwerd, author of the "Saxon Chronicles," (a descendant of King Alfred,) dedicated his work to Matilda, daughter of Otho, the great emperor of Germany. The said "Chronicles," which we shall have occasion sometimes to cite, vary a year or two from other authors. With respect to Alfred's brothers, he relates as follows:—"I will now leave obscurity, and begin to speak concerning the sons of Ethelwulf. They were five in number: the first was Ethelstan, who also shared the kingdom with his father; the second was Ethelbald, who also was king of the Western English; the third was Ethelbert, King of Kent; the fourth was Ethelred, who after the death of Ethelbert, succeeded to the kingdom, and was also my grandfather's grandfather: the fifth was Alfred, who succeeded after all the others to the whole sovereignty, and was your (Matilda's) grandfather's grandfather."

7. Vide Note 5.

8. *Battle of Wilton.*

The following is the description given by Asser, of that memorable battle:—"In the same year, (871,) when he had reigned one month, almost against his will, for he did not think he could alone sustain the multitude and ferocity of the Pagans, though even during his brothers' lives he had borne the woes of many,—he fought a battle with a few men, and on very unequal terms, against all the army of the Pagans, at a hill called Wilton, on the south bank of the river Wily, from which river the whole of that district is named, and after a long and fierce engagement the Pagans, seeing the danger they were in, and no longer able to bear the attack of their enemies, turned their backs and fled. But, oh! shame to say, they deceived their too audacious pursuers, and again rallying, gained the victory. Let no one be surprised that the Christians had but a small number

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of men, for the Saxons had been worn out by eight battles in one year against the Pagans, of whom they had slain one king, nine dukes, and innumerable troops of soldiers, besides endless skirmishes, both by night and by day, in which the oft-named Alfred, and all his chieftains, with their men, and several of his ministers, were engaged without rest or cessation against the Pagans. How many thousand Pagans fell in these numberless skirmishes God alone knows, over and above those who were slain in the eight battles above-mentioned. In the same year the Saxons made peace with the Pagans, on condition that they should take their departure, and they did so."

9. *Alfred's Vessels.*

"Alfred the Great, who turned the energies of his powerful mind to the task of creating a naval force, which should be more than a match for that of his untiring persecutors, the Danes, himself superintended the formation of his fleet, and the vessels he designed were much superior to those of the Danes. These vessels were galleys, generally rowed with forty oars, some even with sixty, on each side; and were twice as long, deeper, swifter, and less "wavy," or rolling, than the ships of the Danes. These vessels were not so well adapted for commercial purposes as for warfare, they having accommodation for a large force, and affording room for fighting; and this build of ship was mostly used for war, until the introduction of cannon rendered other arrangements necessary."—*The Ship: its Origin and Progress.*

10. *Defeat of the Danish Fleet.*

"In the year 877, the Pagans, on the approach of autumn, partly settled in Exeter, and partly marched for plunder into Mercia. The number of that disorderly crew increased every day, so that, if thirty thousand of them were slain in one battle, others took their places to double the number. Then King Alfred ordered boats and galleys, *i. e.* long ships, to be built throughout the kingdom, in order to offer battle by sea to the enemy as they were coming. On board of these he placed seamen, and appointed them to watch the seas. Meanwhile he went himself to Exeter, where the Pagans were wintering, and having shut them up within the walls, laid siege to the town. He also gave orders to his sailors to prevent them from obtaining any supplies by sea; and his sailors were encountered by a fleet of a hundred and twenty ships full of armed soldiers, who were come to help

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their countrymen. As soon as the king's men knew that they were fitted with Pagan soldiers, they leaped to their arms, and bravely attacked those barbaric tribes: but the Pagans, who had now for nearly a month been tossed and almost wrecked among the waves of the sea, fought vainly against them; their bands were discomfited in a moment, and all were sunk and drowned in the sea, at a place called Suanewic.*

"In the same year the army of Pagans, leaving Wareham, partly on horseback, and partly by water, arrived at Suanewic, where one hundred and twenty of their ships were lost; and King Alfred pursued their land army as far as Exeter; there he made a covenant with them, and took hostages that they would depart.

"The same year, in the month of August, that army went into Mercia, and gave part of that country to one Ceolwulf, a weak-minded man, and one of the king's ministers; the other part they divided among themselves."—*Asser's Life of Alfred.*

11. *Chippenham surprised by the Danes.*

"In the year of our Lord's incarnation 878, which was the thirtieth of King Alfred's life, the army above-mentioned left Exeter and went to Chippenham, a royal villa, situated in the west of Wiltshire, and on the eastern bank of the river, which is called in British, the Avon. There they wintered, and drove many of the inhabitants of that country beyond the sea, by the force of their arms, and by want of the necessaries of life. They reduced almost entirely to subjection all the people of that country."—*Ibid.*

12. *Adventure of the Cakes.*

"At the same time the above-named Alfred, king of the West-Saxons, with a few of his nobles, and certain soldiers and vassals, used to lead an unquiet life among the woodlands of the county of Somerset, in great tribulation; for he had none of the necessaries of life, except what he could, by frequent sallies, forage openly or stealthily from the Pagans, or even from the Christians who had submitted to the rule of the Pagans, and as we read in the Life of St. Neot, at the house of one of his cowherds.

"But it happened on a certain day, that the countrywoman, wife of the cowherd, was preparing some loaves to bake, and the king, sitting at the hearth, made ready his bow and arrows and other warlike instruments. The unlucky woman

* Swanwich, in Dorsetshire.

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espying the cakes burning at the fire, ran up to remove them, and rebuking the brave king, exclaimed:—

> 'Ca'sn thee mind the ke-aks, man, an' doossen zee 'em burn?
> 'I'm boun thee's eat 'em vast enough, az zoon az 'tiz the turn.'*

The blundering woman little thought that it was King Alfred, who had fought so many battles against the Pagans, and gained so many victories over them."—*Ibid.*

The adventure of the cakes is related differently by various authors. According to one she exclaimed, "*Why don't you turn the cakes when you see them burning? You will be glad enough to eat them when they are hot.*" According to another the excited woman said angrily to the king, "*Turn thou those loaves, that they burn not, for I see daily that thou art a great eater.*" In a Latin Life of St. Neot, she says, "*Why, man, do you sit thinking there, and are too proud to turn the bread? Whatever be your family, with such manners and sloth, what trust can be put in you hereafter? If you were even a nobleman, you will be glad to eat the bread which you neglect to attend to.*"

We will leave it to serious historians and antiquarians to search deeply into this *very important* matter of history, (which has already been partly done,) as our work is not profound enough to enter into more details regarding such *serious facts*, but its record by three different authors proves at least somewhat of it to be founded on truth—a fact we cannot assert of many historical traditions.

Florence, of Worcester, takes no note of the anecdote of the cakes, but the peasant, into whose rustic life fortune interwove this golden episode, was called, according to the above author, Denulf.

The humble life which Alfred led with the inhabitants of the rustic farm-house in Somersetshire, and with his companions in the woods, who subsisted by hunting and fishing, was an admirable school for a prince, who was liable, as is said of Alfred in the first part of his reign, to carry his head on high, and to despise the petitions of his people. A king, moreover, who had gained from books a more extensive knowledge of men and things than was usually acquired by others in that age, must have felt much and reflected deeply upon the degradation to which he was reduced. The prince who had led the West-Saxons so often to battle, was at last brought to so low a condition, that he was beholden to a humble farmer, once his own servant, for his daily bread.

* The original here is in Latin verse, and may therefore be rendered into English verse, but such as every housewife in Somersetshire would understand.

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The few nobles who had followed him were obliged to disperse, to procure themselves food. This was a lesson of practical wisdom, not to be found in any of the books which the king had studied so attentively. It may have been delineated in figurative language in some of the verses of that book of Poems, which his mother had given him seventeen years before, but it was now brought home to himself by a catastrophe which fell like a thunderbolt upon him. Though we may justly hesitate to ascribe such events to the visible judgments of heaven, or to believe that they occur as direct modes of punishment for transgression, yet to the wise man—and Alfred certainly was one—they will always become real blessings to clear the understanding from vain and unprofitable affections, to dispose the will towards the path of prudence, and to strengthen the heart and hands to struggle more effectually with the difficulties which present themselves in life. Neither did this mental discipline come on Alfred too early or too late for him to benefit by it. He was only twenty-nine years, neither too old and seared to receive the salutary lessons of adversity, nor too young and yielding to retain them, but of that intermediate age, which ushers in the prime and hale period of manhood, when it might be hoped that he would have many years before him to mature his reflections, to bring forth the true fruits of the wisdom which he had gained, and to form that character of himself and of his reign which he would wish to go down to future ages.

13. *Legend of the appearance of St. Cuthbert to Alfred, and his Visit to the Danish Camp.*

"There is a place," is written in the Life of St. Neot, "on the furthest extremity of the English, towards the west, called Ethelingeye, or the Isle of Nobles, surrounded on every side by marshes, and so inaccessible, that it can be approached only in a boat. The island contains a great grove of alder-trees, wherein are stags, goats, and many animals of that kind: it comprises scarcely two acres of solid ground. To this island came Alfred alone, for in his dejection he left behind him the few soldiers who accompanied him, that he might the better avoid the enemy; and perceiving there a cottage belonging to some unknown individual, he went up to it, and asked a lodging, which was granted him. For he remained there some days, a stranger and poor, doing what the peasant and his wife told him, and content with the merest necessaries. When asked who he

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was, or what business he had in so lonely a place, he replied, that he was one of the king's servants, who had been defeated with him in battle, and had escaped to this spot from the enemy who were pursuing them. The herdsman, trusting to his words, took pity on him, and carefully supplied him with the necessaries of life."

Ingulf's version of the legend of the appearance of St. Cuthbert to Alfred, (mentioned at page 17,) a legend likewise mentioned in "Brompton," Simeon of Durham's "History of the Church of Durham," and elsewhere, is as follows: —"The fortress which Alfred constructed in Athelney he afterwards converted into a monastery of monks, in memory of the time which he had spent there, and to the exaltation of the holy church. One day, when the whole household had gone out to fish in the neighbouring marshes, and the king was sitting alone in this fortress, engaged in studying the holy Scriptures, or reading the exploits of illustrious men, as was his constant custom, and the annals of the fathers, he heard a poor man knock at the door, and ask something to eat for the mercy of God. Calling his mother, who was then residing with him, he told her to go to the cellar, and give something to the poor Christian man for the love of Christ. She went to do as he bade her, but finding only one loaf there, she came and told the king that there was not enough for the household, who would soon return from fishing. The king, hearing this, (that there should be such poverty in a king's larder!) gave devout thanks to God, and commanded that half of the loaf should be given to the poor servant of Christ, adding these words, 'Blessed be God in his gifts! He is able, if He so will, to increase that half immensely, who, when He so willed it, was able to feed five thousand men on five loaves and two fishes.' He then dismissed the poor man, and afterwards, fatigued by the weight of his cares, or by his protracted reading, he went to rest, and saw the holy Bishop Cuthbert approach to him, and deliver this message in the name of the Lord. 'Pious King Alfred, the Lord is moved to pity at the misery of the English, who have mourned long and deeply for their sins: He has, moreover, this day, in the form of a poor man, approved your patience, and gratefully received the morsel which you gave Him in the midst of your own great want. He promises you, through me, that, though you are now a wretched exile, you shall soon be victorious over your enemies, and triumphantly regain the throne of your kingdom. And this shall be a sign to you, that though your household, who are

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gone out to fish, may find great impediment to their success in the winter's ice, yet, by the Divine mercy, they shall gain the object of their wishes, and about the third hour of the day, shall return with a wonderful quantity of fish.' Saying these words, the saint disappeared, and the king awaking, told the vision to his mother, who replied that she also, whilst asleep in her chamber, had seen the same vision, and the same saint, appearing to her in like manner, had addressed her in the same words. As they were speaking, the fishermen came in from the marshes with an abundance of fish, enough to feed a large army."

The anecdote related in page 18 is confirmed by some, and contested by other writers. William of Malmesbury tells us that "King Alfred used often in later days to speak of the time which he spent in the wilds of Somersetshire, of the hardships which he daily suffered, and of the dangers which continually encompassed him. It was now about five months since his troops had been defeated by the enemy, and himself obliged to become a fugitive and an outcast." But it is more likely that the plan which King Alfred adopted was what afterwards mainly conduced to bring about his restoration, and the re-establishment of his country's freedom. Many indications of this appear in the narratives of the old chroniclers. It is probable that the Danes owed their success at Chippenham in a great measure to the suddenness of their attack, and the king now seems to have retaliated upon them by a similar mode of operations. That he kept up a communication with his faithful nobles throughout the three countries, is evident; for by a hasty summons of a few days, a large army was speedily brought together. Before, however, his standard was again spread to the breezes, it was Alfred's policy to obtain all the information in his power concerning his enemies, to reconnoitre their position, their defences, and to examine where they were the most exposed to attack from negligence, or the consciousness of security. The story which is told of Alfred has been credited by some, and rejected as fabulous by others. It certainly is not found in Asser's Biography, nor in the other five early chronicles; but it is told by Ingulf, who lived at the time of the Norman Conquest, and may have had access to other records which since have perished. It is also found in the "History of the Kings of England," by Malmesbury, who was not prone to listen to fables, unless they were such as rested on the authority of the church. Neither does the anecdote seem to be at all improbable, when we consider the

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nature of the times, and the great simplicity of kings, who mixed with their subjects without that affectation of pomp and dignity, which at present are used as a substitute for departed power. It was the king's intention to assemble his troops and to surprise the enemy unprepared, as they had before surprised him at Chippenham. To strike a sure blow, it was necessary that he should be able to depend upon the accuracy of his information. If he failed at this crisis of his fate, a second chance would probably never present itself: he could not trust the eyes or ears of an ordinary spy, and he determined to go himself and inspect the motions of the enemy. Now it was that he derived a practical benefit from the subjects of his early education. The Saxon poems and ballads, which he drunk in with an attentive ear in his youth, were still fresh in his mind, and the harp, which almost every person of decent condition in those days could touch, was not silent in the king's hands. The profession of a minstrel was held in general estimation among the northern nations. Singing the deeds of war, they were themselves exempt from its terrors: the sword and spear were lowered to greet the gleeman who chanced to enter the tent of the warrior, and many a time did the savage chieftain, melting at the plaintive melody of song, verify the words of the poet, who sings that

"Music hath charms to soothe the savage breast!"

To effect his purpose, Alfred adopted the costume of a Saxon minstrel, and set out for the Danish camp, which was still in the neighbourhood of Chippenham; for so total seems to have been the defeat of the English, that the enemy imagined they were annihilated, and gave themselves up to security and enjoyment. The king was admitted without difficulty to their camp, and had an opportunity of seeing every thing which was passing within. He, perhaps, may have been brought into the presence of Guthrum himself, and witnessed the ease and confidence which reigned in that chieftain's tent. When he had satisfied himself on all the points which he wished to know, he returned to Athelney, a distance of thirty or forty miles.

14. *Capture of the Standard of the Northmen.*

Spelman relates that "instead of this battle, there were two; in the first of which, Odin alone was victorious, and conquered the general standard of the Northmen. In the second, Alfred vanquished the robbers, and soon after compelled them to surrender."

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15. *The Magic Standard.*

"This," says Sir John Spelman, "was a banner, with the image of a raven magically wrought by the three sisters of Hinguar and Hubba, on purpose for their expedition, in revenge of their father, Lodebroch's murder; made, they say, almost in an instant, being by them at once begun and finished in a noontide, and believed by the Danes to have carried great fatality with it, for which it was highly esteemed by them. It is pretended, that being carried in a battle, towards good success it would alway seem to clap its wings, and make as if it would fly; but towards the approach of mishap it would hang down and not move."

Asser relates that his relative, St. Neot, appeared to him in a dream, and comforted him with the assurance that the next day would end all his calamities: "The next morning he marched to Ethandune, and there fought a fierce and well-contested battle against all the army of the Pagans, whom, with the Divine help, he defeated with great slaughter, and pursued them flying to their fortification. Immediately he slew all the men and carried off all the booty he could find outside the fortress, which he afterwards laid siege to with all his army. When fourteen days were expired, the Pagans, compelled by famine, cold, fear, and lastly by despair, asked for peace, on condition that they should give the king as many hostages as he pleased, but should receive none from him in return, in which form they had never before made a treaty with any one. The king showed them mercy, and received such hostages as he chose, after which the Pagans swore also, that they would immediately leave the kingdom; and their king, Guthrum, promised to embrace Christianity, and receive baptism at King Alfred's hands. All of which articles he and his men fulfilled as they had promised. For, seven weeks afterwards, King Guthrum himself, with thirty chosen men of his army, came to Alfred at a place called Aller, near Athelney, and there King Alfred, receiving him as his son by adoption, raised him from the holy laver of baptism on the eighth day, at the royal villa of Wedmore, where the holy ointment was poured upon him. After his baptism, he remained twelve days with the king, who, with all his nobles, gave him many fine houses."

So brief a narrative of the victory at Ethandune, which replaced Alfred more firmly than before on the throne of his kingdom, has naturally given much subject for inquiry to the critics and commentators, who have endeavoured to

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trace the movements of the king's army in this rapid and glorious campaign. There is nothing better established in history than the identity of Ethelingeye, where Alfred's fortress in the marshes was constructed, with the modern Athelney. Capricious fortune has mercifully spared the antiquary the greater mortification which a doubt on this point would have produced. A beautiful jewel was found many years ago on the spot; and the original is still preserved in the Ashmolean Museum at Oxford. Did the king drop this gem in the hurry of his frequent sallies on the enemy, and equally hasty retreats to his fortress? or, was it deposited in the monastery, which Alfred afterwards constructed there, as a precious personal relic of the great king, and of the heroic stand which he there made to defend the rights of his throne and the liberties of his people? These are questions which we cannot answer; for the speechless relic tells us no more than that it is as old as the time of Alfred, which is evident from the style of workmanship, and the Saxon writing, "ALFRED HAD ME WORKED," with which it is inscribed. An engraving of the reverse of this jewel, with the above sentence, will be found in p. 186, and the face on the embossed cover of this book.

16. *River Stowe.*

This river is called by Asser "Sture," and is remarkable, inasmuch that Zocrin, who lived shortly after the death of Brutus, and married Guendolæna, the daughter of Corineus, was killed there by the shot of an arrow, and his wife afterwards took upon her the government of the whole kingdom.

17. *London Rebuilt, and Erection of Castles.*

"In 868," says Asser, "after the burning of cities and the slaughter of his people, he honourably rebuilt the city of London, and made it again habitable. He gave it into the custody of his son-in-law, Ethelred, Earl of Mercia; for all the Angles and Saxons, who had before been dispersed everywhere, or were in captivity with the Pagans, voluntarily turned and submitted themselves to his dominion."

The king's ministers had previously neglected and partly refused to fulfil their master's commands, concerning the erection of castles, and preferred, with true Saxon blood, to face their enemies in an open field of battle, rather than retire for safety behind the walls of a fortress. The king himself zealously discharged such of these duties which

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came under his own immediate care, and restored the towns and cities that were dilapidated, to more than their former condition; but when they beheld the king's talent, they with one voice praised the royal wisdom, and tried with all their power to fulfil what they had before refused, namely—the erection of castles, and other things useful to the whole kingdom.

Spelman seems to have thought that Alfred was the first to construct buildings of hewn stones, which can be judged by the following passage:—"Neither was the reparation notable in regard of the greatness and universality only, but it was also of an extraordinary kind, both in regard of the materials, and of the new manner; for, when the walls of towns and castles were but wood, and combustible, (as we may see by those of York and Rochester, that they generally then were,) stone buildings were very rare, till Alfred made them more frequent."

According to Hearne, he was the founder of Middleton, and Barfoot in Kent, of Devizes in Wilts, and of Alfreton in Derbyshire. Malmesbury, and the city of Norwich, were also restored, and some additions made to them.

18. *Various Conflicts with the Danes in* 893-94.

"In the year 893, one year after the barbarians fought against King Arnulf, they go to Boulogne, and there build a fleet, and pass over into England. There they station their fleet in the Limnean port, at a place called Apoldre [Appledore, in the eastern part of Kent,] and destroy an ancient castle, because there was but a small band of rustics within, and there they make their winter camp. In the course of this year, a large fleet belonging to Hasten arrives on the banks of the river Thames, and found a citadel on the coasts of Kent, at a place called Middleton [Milton]: they encamp there the whole winter; and the number of years that had elapsed from the glorious nativity of our Saviour was nine hundred all but seven."

The Monk of Malmesbury says, that "with his usual activity, the king was present in every action, ever daunting the invaders, and at the same time inspiring his subjects with the signal display of his own courage. He would oppose himself singly to the enemy; and by his personal exertions rally his forces whenever they were wavering; the very places are still pointed out by the inhabitants, where he felt the vicissitudes of his good or evil fortune."

"Undismayed at the intelligence which arrived from

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Devonshire, the king divided his forces into two bodies, one of which he despatched against the Danes in Bemfleet, whilst he hastened with the other to raise the siege of Exeter. The party which was detached eastward arrived at London, where they were reinforced by a body of the citizens and others from the west of England, after which they pursued their march to Bemfleet The great army which had been at Appledore was now within the Danish lines, but Hasting was absent on a plundering excursion, which he was making for the second time, in breach of his treaty with the brave Ethelred, in Mercia. The English stormed the fortress, and took all the spoil that was therein, besides all the women and children; they broke in pieces or burnt many of the Danish ships: the rest they carried into Rochester or to London, together with all the prisoners and booty. Among the captives were the wife and children of Hasting: and this calamity having its due effect upon the mind of the haughty Dane, a second treaty was entered into, hostages for its observance were given, and the wife and children sent back unhurt to the Danish camp.

"In the mean time Alfred arrived at Exeter, where he found the enemy laying siege to the city: the Danes decamped at his approach, and fled to their ships. The king was thus at liberty to return into the eastern parts of the kingdom, but from some circumstances which have not been handed down to us, we find that he remained some weeks longer in Devonshire. During this delay in the west, the broken armies of the enemy had rallied from their late defeats, and again entrenched themselves at Shobury in Essex, but soon after being reinforced by a large body of East-Anglian and Northumbrian Danes, they marched inland, following the course of the Thames; from thence crossing to the Severn, they marched up the banks of that river to Buttington, probably the small town which is still so called, and is situated on a stream of the same name in Gloucestershire. But their progress through Mercia was not effected without rousing its inhabitants to arms. The brave Ethelred, its ruler, together with the aldermen, Ethelm and Ethelnoth, and the king's thane, who were in custody of the fortresses in those parts, assembled their troops from all the towns of the river Perrot, and joined by some forces from Mercia and North Wales, they shut the Danish army up in their fortified camp. Here they besieged them several weeks, during the time the king's army was still at Exeter. At length the besieged began to be in want

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of food, and were compelled to eat their horses. Some of them died of starvation; the rest, taking courage from despair, sallied out upon the English, who lay upon the eastern side of the Severn, and engaged them in battle. The contest was fierce and bloody; Orthelm and many other king's thanes were slain, but the Danes were entirely defeated, and, having lost a large number of men, sought safety in flight. Those who survived this defeat, took refuge at the fortress in Essex; where before the winter they received such reinforcements out of East Anglia and Northumberland, that they were again able to move, and pursue their ravages as before. Committing their ships, their wives, and all their effects to the guardianship of the friendly East Anglians, they "went at one stretch"—such is the expression of the Saxon Chronicle—"day and night," until they arrived at Chester, at that time uninhabited. This march was conducted with such speed, that the English were unable to come up with them: the Danes were already safe within the city, and the troops of Alfred slew all they found without the walls, took all the cattle, and burnt or consumed all the corn in the fields. This happened at the end of 894, not much more than twelve months after Hasting first came over from France."—"*Life and Times of Alfred the Great*," *by Dr. Giles.*

19. *Capture of the Danish Fleet on the River Lea.*

"In the beginning of the year 896, the Danes, sailing up the Thames, turned to the right, and followed the course of the river Lea, until they came to the neighbourhood of the modern towns of Hertford and Ware, about twenty miles from London. Here they constructed their fortifications as usual; and the citizens of London, alarmed at their proximity, marched out at the approach of summer to attack them. In the battle which ensued the Londoners were worsted, and, with the loss of "some four king's thanes," obliged to retreat. The king now arrived with his troops, and encamped near London, to protect the reapers as they were gathering in the crops. One day the king, riding along the banks of the river, observed a place, where the river might be so obstructed that the ships of the Danes would not be able to pass. The idea was immediately put into effect, and two fortresses constructed on the opposite banks of the river. The English had hardly set themselves down to accomplish this work, before the Danes saw the evil which would inevitably ensue to their shipping. Abandoning

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these to their fate, they hastily left their position on the Lea, and crossing the country, arrived at Quatbridge, (supposed to be the modern Bridgenorth,) or Quatford, on the Severn. Here they speedily entrenched themselves, and the third year of the campaign passed away with, apparently, little prospect that a war against so active and vivacious an enemy would ever come to an end.

"But, in reality, the strength of the Danish invaders was now departed from them. Though often reinforced by their friends, the old Danish settlers, the tide of success was evidently setting against them, and the policy or the mercy of Alfred was directed to separate the interests of the Danes located in the island from those of the new comers. His armies, too, were more than a match for the whole united army, which, by its frequent defeats, were lessened in numbers, and dispirited in courage. Their fleet, also, by Alfred's stratagem on the river Lea, was now lost to them. The citizens of London took possession of the ships in the Lea, whilst Alfred's army gallopped westwards after the enemy: some of the best of the vessels were towed to London, others were destroyed, and the enemy's main dependence in all enterprises, their fleet, was entirely annihilated."—*Ibid.*

20. *Alfred and Hasting.*

Alfred can be regarded with impartiality as the champion of a settled society, of equal rights, and of civilized life, while his opponent, Hasting, represents the barbarian roving over the world with no law but that of his sword; he may inflict for a time the greatest woes upon mankind, but will assuredly fall at last the victim of a ferocious system which engulphs all that enter into it.

21. *Flattery.*

We here perceive, that princes have, at all times, been surrounded with flatterers, to whom they could not resist lending a too willing ear. That intoxicating poison—FLATTERY—had fortunately no effect upon Alfred. But even our author was not free from it; for although he has not, we are glad to see, employed it in the narrative of Alfred's life, almost wholly founded upon historical facts—yet, in his dedication to George III., he has used a no small dose of that drug, wherefore we have altogether omitted it.

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BOOK II.

22. *Alfred's Marriage.*

THE episode of Alfred's love, which our author has introduced in his history, and which there forms the sixth book, seems not at all to be founded upon history, which he acknowledges himself, pretending that tradition alone has preserved its memory in an ancient song, entitled "Edgar and Emma." All our researches in the British Museum, and other libraries, to discover the authenticity of that song, were fruitless. We will, however, not therefore accuse it of being a mere fiction, although it seems that Haller wished to render his book interesting to the Germans by that episode. His purpose was probably to make his serious doctrines more popular, by giving them a romantic drapery, which he owns himself in his preface. We know not whether such a system is applicable in this country, as the English may be considered as complete *professors* of gravity, and masters in the art *de s'ennuyer*. They all like to read that—*which is in their line;* but even in spite of this custom, Walter Scott, Bulwer, and other authors, have succeeded in using historical canvasses for romantic tales.

With respect to Alfred's marriage, history relates, that although Alfred was a very good husband, and Elswitha a very honourable lady, their marriage was not one of passionate love, but rather a political calculation of his mother Osburga, who probably, like Rachel in the Holy Writ, wished that her son Alfred might take a wife out of her own country, Mercia. Among the noblemen of that province was a namesake of the West-Saxon king, Ethelred, alderman of the Ganii, surnamed from his size, "Mickle," or "the Big." The wife of this Ethelred was Edburga, descended from the Mercian royal family, and probably a relative of Osburga. But Edburga, unlike the former queen of that name, who disgraced her family and rank, was a virtuous, and, in the language of Asser, who saw her a few years before her death,

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"a venerable lady, who survived her husband, and passed the remainder of her life in widowhood." This lady, by Ethelred, had a daughter named Elswitha, whom Alfred now asked and obtained in marriage. The union was a happy one, as has been inferred by Turner, from the earnestness with which Alfred, in his translation of Boethius, speaks on the subject of connubial affection.

23. *License of Poetical Fiction.*

Although unlikely that ladies of the highest rank should deign to look down upon common servants, this improbability has often been made use of in poetical fiction, and still oftener greatly abused. This privilege has but lately been so far extended by Victor Hugo, in his drama of "Ruy Blas," as to let a queen fall in love with a livery servant. The absurdity of the exaggeration is, however, from the great skill of the author, scarcely perceived by the audience, during the performance of the drama.

24. *Hunting and Falconry.*

Asser thus describes the arts of hunting and falconry among the laborious pursuits of Alfred:—"The Saxons brought with them, out of Germany, a strong liking for the pleasures and dangers of the chase: hunting was held to be a necessary part of a liberal education; it inured the Saxon youth to hardihood, made them active, patient of toil, and prompt to extricate themselves from the dangers into which a headlong pursuit after the wild beasts of the forest might lead them. The king had been bred up from his boyhood to this exercise, and continued to practise it, and to encourage it among his subjects, as a means of raising their manly courage, whilst it added to the state and magnificence of his own court.

"It may be added, that the breed of English dogs has been remarkable from the days of Nemesian and Oppian: and was not likely to have escaped the attention of the observant king. The extensive marshes also, and the inundations which so frequently deluged the plains on the banks of the English rivers, furnished great temptations and facilities for the successful prosecution of falconry."

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BOOK III.

25. *Alfred's firmness undaunted.*

England had enjoyed comparative tranquillity during fifteen years, namely, from 878 to 893; and the reign of Alfred may be divided into three periods, according to the varied character of the events which predominated at different times. The first period comprehends seven years, from his accession to the throne in 871, to his defeat at Chippenham, and expulsion from his throne in 878. This part of his life is diversified by few occurrences, which were thought worthy to be transmitted to posterity, though it comprises the two last attempts which the Danes made to reduce Wessex to the state of servitude, in which the rest of the island was bound. The short and decisive campaign, which first threw this able wrestler, and afterwards raised him from his fall stronger and more vigorous than before, may be looked on as one of those tests, by which superior talents occasionally are tried. It was a necessary discipline for the king's mind; for a king must not engross himself too deeply in the arts of peace alone; or devote the whole of his time to learning and religion. If then Alfred had sunk under the trial to which his firmness was exposed in 878, if he had fled to a safer home, and left his kingdom a prey to the barbarians, his name would have come down to us, not as the focus of glories that will ever dazzle the eye and fill the mind of those who contemplate them, but as the worthy contemporary and equal of Burrhed, king of Mercia, and other kings, who in the age immediately preceding that of Alfred, made no scruple to abandon the high and useful stations in which Providence had placed them.

26. *A few Remarks on Juries.*

Our author's remarks on the jurymen should the more be appreciated, since this manner of administering justice

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has, in the present century been, and will still more be introduced throughout the whole of Europe, as it has already been in the United States, France, the Rhenish-Prussian provinces, and other states; but we fear that it will in reality, in some of those countries, be no improvement of true justice; for neither the character of the French, nor that of the Germans, are fitted for it. No objection can be made to the publicity given to such trials, as that prevents any of those abuses which took place under the arbitrary manner in which judgments were previously given in other countries, and principally under the Spanish Inquisition, under the tribunal of Venice, and even in France, whereof the unfortunate fate of Jean Calas is a sad example, without calculating the many abuses of *lettres de cachet*, &c. But the foundation of justice, which is impregnated in all English hearts, their coolness and moderation, even when not favoured with a sufficient scientific education, cannot be found in any other nation; and to that it may be attributed, that these institutions, created since so many centuries, are still preserved, without having undergone any reform.

But, like a worn-out coat, all things that have remained unaltered during so long a period, require some repairs. We think that some reforms are necessary, as judges, accusers, and defendants, as well as juries, deviate from the functions they were originally intended to fulfil.

The accuser endeavours to make an impression by his acuteness, whereby he composes, through evidence, suspicion, and probability, an *ensemble*, intended to awe the defendant, whilst he should only give a simple narrative of the facts, without any comment on his part.

The judge who, in former times, was only the leader of the transaction, endeavours, from ambition, to acquire popularity and fame, by seeming impartiality, but considering his own opinions and views as supreme as his power, he imparts them to the jury, whilst he should strictly keep to the letter of the law. Sometimes he is too severe, sometimes too mild; but the jury almost always feel, by various means, his preponderance, which often breaks out—not in expounding the law—but in jokes and sarcasms.

The defender who, in former times, sought to affect the judges by his eloquence, now looks upon that means with contempt, and does not take the trouble to prove the greater or lesser extent of the crime imputed to the culprit, but merely to detect some technical flaw in the indictment.

The jurors, who are not acquainted with the law, and not

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guided by a regular code, judge according to their own impression; they consider far too much the tranquillity of society, and the necessity of warning examples, as to weigh scrupulously the arguments for guilt or innocence, thinking it sometimes their duty to be severe, and at others the reverse. Thus the punishments are generally more severe and cruel in England than in other civilized countries, without the situation of society being thereby improved. It were quite superfluous for us to cite examples of what we assert; the record of the judgments given during the last epochs is an ample proof.

27. *Anglo-Saxon Legislation before Alfred and Alfred's Code.*

The Saxon laws of Ethelbert, Ina, Withred, and Offa, which formed the Anglo-Saxon legislation previous to Alfred's time, were few and imperfect. Ninety short sentences contain all that has been preserved of the laws of Ethelbert, King of Kent. Sixteen sentences contain the Dooms of his successors, Lothaire and Edric; and twenty sentences comprise all the laws that have survived of Withred, another king of the same province. The subjects to which these ordinances apply are a few of the most obvious injuries that occur in a simple state of society. It is remarkable, that almost every crime, from murder to the smallest petty larceny, had its value, and might be compensated by the payment of a sum of money. Another celebrated legislator was Ina, King of the West-Saxons, a few pages of whose laws have also been preserved. It must not, however, be omitted, that the laws of Ina have come down to us not in a separate and independent form, but appended to those of Alfred, to whose care in collecting and preserving the ancient jurisprudence of his country, we are indebted for all that we now know of the subject.

As the West-Saxons owed their principal code of laws to Ina, so was Offa, the legislator of the Mercians; but his laws have not been preserved; and if in later times Alfred published a separate collection for the use of Mercia, with the laws of Offa annexed, as those of Ina were attached to the laws of Wessex, that collection also has either perished, or has not yet been discovered. It might be expected that the laws of a people, emerging, under the auspices of the Church, from barbarism, would be strongly tinged with the opinions of the clerks who compiled them. In fact, the whole of these legislative codes are based upon the autho-

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rity of the Scriptures and of the Church. The first ordinance of Ethelbert enacts, that the abstraction of any property belonging to God or to the Church shall be compensated for by twelve times its value.

Alfred's laws were founded upon the Apostolic Council held in Jerusalem, and upon the Constitution gradually collected by the Church since the time of the Apostles.

The code of Alfred, which is contained in Thorpe's "Ancient Laws," Vol. I. p. 59, and the former ones from p. 1 to 43, and from p. 102 to 151, are as follow:—

"Wherefore I, Alfred, king, gathered these together, and commanded many of those to be written which our forefathers held, those which to me seemed good; and many of those which seemed to me not good, I rejected, by the counsel of my 'witan' [parliament,] and in other wise commanded them to be holden; for I durst not venture to set down in writing much of my own; for it was unknown to me what of it would please those who should come after us. But those things which I met with, either of the days of Ina my kinsman, or of Offa, king of the Mercians, or of Ethelbert, who first among the English race received baptism, those which seemed to me the rightest, those I have here gathered together, and rejected the others. I, then, Alfred, king of the West-Saxons, showed these to all my witan, and they then said that it seemed good to them all to be holden."

The nature of all the laws in Alfred's code is peculiar and striking to our present notions. The principle of compensation for offences, of values attached to different ranks, and of taking sanctuary in the Church until the compensation could be assessed, engendered a complicated system, which ramified into almost as many precedents as there were cases. An instance or two of these laws will set this in a stronger light.

"If any one, for whatever crime, flee to any of the minster-hams, &c., let him have three days to protect himself, unless he is willing to come to terms. If during this space any one harm him by blow or by bond, or wound him, let him make compensation, &c., for each of these, according to regular usage, &c. &c., and to the brotherhood, 120 shillings as compensation for the church-frith [*breach of church privilege*,] &c."

"If a man be born dumb or deaf, so that he cannot acknowledge or confess his offences, let his father make compensation for his misdeeds."

"If a man, kinless of paternal relatives, fight, and slay a

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man; then if he have maternal relatives, let them pay a third of the 'wer,' [*fine or compensation-money,*] his guild-brethren another third, and for a third let him flee. If he have no maternal relatives, let his guild-brethren pay half, and for the other half let him flee."

The law concerning 'boc-lands' seems to show that a species of entail existed as early as the days of Alfred.

"The man who has boc-land,"—*i. e.* land held by deeds or writings,—"and which his kindred left him, we ordain that he must not give it from his kinsfolk; if there be writing or witness that it was forbidden by those men who at first acquired it, and by those who gave it to him, that he should do so; and then let that be declared in the presence of the king and of the bishop, before his kinsmen."

The laws of Ina, adopted by Alfred for his own, are of the same general character; the following examples may suffice:—

"Let a child, within thirty days, be baptized. If it be not so, let him make compensation with thirty shillings; but, if it die without baptism, let him make compensation for it with all that he has."

"If any one be guilty of death, and he flee to a church, let him have his life, and make compensation as the law may direct him. If any one put his hide in peril, and flee to a church, let the scourging be forgiven him."

"If any one steal, so that his wife and his children know it not, let him pay sixty shillings, as compensation; but if he steal with the knowledge of all his household, let them all go into slavery. A boy of ten years may be privy to a theft."

It is manifest that such laws as these belong to an infant state of things, and can be of no other use in the present day than as illustrating the steps by which legislation has progressed from its first simple elements, to the long and laborious Acts of Parliament by which our existing society is regulated.

It is of more importance to the character of Alfred, that the laws, such as they were in his time, were equitably administered. In every country and in every age, those who possess wealth and influence insensibly form themselves into a caste, from which they endeavour to exclude those who have fewer advantages than themselves. Almost all the revolutions which have afflicted the world, have arisen out of the difficulty of adjusting rights between the higher and lower classes of society. It is to be believed, for the

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credit of our nature, that these strifes would have been prevented, if the contending parties could have agreed beforehand that each should take charge of the interests of the other. The practice of the truly Christian rule, "to do to others as you would they should do unto you," would sever all the discords which are engendered among mankind. The rich, even those who are most elevated and pampered by their prosperity, have still a spark of kindly feeling towards those who are struggling beneath them, and to whose level they know they themselves, in the vicissitudes of things, are liable to be reduced. On the other hand, the poor in general are unwilling to destroy every thing above them, because, in a moment of accidental prosperity, they may hope to rise to a higher position, and to enjoy a larger portion of the goods of life. If reason could usurp her rights over the minds of men, many of the evils which spring from the collision of classes would vanish. But man is mostly subject to the dictates, not of reason, but of passion, and that which reason would have guided into the harbour of safety, becomes, under the conduct of passion, an entangled maze, out of which nothing but just and equitable laws can extricate mankind. In the civil wars, which so long afflicted England in the time of Alfred, the nobles had attained to such a pitch of lawlessness and self-will, that the rights of their inferiors were little respected, and the courts of justice, if not entirely suppressed, were merely legalized forms of injustice, which, dictated from the mouth of ignorance, were carried into effect by the hand of oppression. To remedy this evil was the principal aim and the highest glory of Alfred. He who pronounces a just sentence, unbiassed by the frowns of power or the allurements of favour, exalts himself above his equals, and commands the respect of mankind. "The poor," says Asser,—and the poor in those days comprehended probably every one but the king, the nobles, and the church,—"had no other protector but the king." What a comprehensive and magnificient idea of kingly power is compressed into that sentence! With what eagerness will all men strive to defend the throne, which is built upon such a basis, the basis of equally administering justice, and of protecting those who are unable to protect themselves!

The king's courts, in those times, were more properly so called than at present. The sovereign himself, like the eastern caliphs, often administered justice in person: Alfred certainly did so; and Asser records to his praise, that he

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strove, in his own judgments, to hold the scales of justice even between all his subjects, whether noble or ignoble. At the courts held by his earls and prefects, the most unbecoming quarrels often arose: the suitors seldom acquiesced in the sentence which those officers pronounced; and sought with the greatest eagerness to carry their causes before the king himself. "If any one," continues Asser, "was conscious of injustice on his side in the suit, though by law and agreement he was compelled, however reluctant, to go before the king, yet with his own good will he never would consent to go. For he knew that in the king's presence no part of his wrong would be hidden; and no wonder, for the king was a most acute investigator in passing sentence, as he was in all other things. He inquired into almost all the judgments which were given in his own absence, throughout all his dominions, whether they were just or unjust. If he perceived there was iniquity in those judgments, he summoned the judges, either through his own agency, or through others of his faithful servants, and asked them mildly, why they had judged so unjustly; whether through ignorance or malevolence; *i. e.* whether for the love or fear of any one, or hatred of others; or perhaps for the desire of money. At length, if the judges acknowledged they had given judgment because they knew no better, he discreetly and moderately reproved their inexperience and folly in such terms as these: 'I wonder truly at your insolence, that, whereas, by God's favour and mine, you have occupied the rank and office of the wise, you have neglected the studies and labours of the wise: either, therefore, at once give up the discharge of the temporal duties which you hold, or endeavour more zealously to study the lessons of wisdom. Such are my commands.' At these words the earls and prefects would tremble, and endeavour to turn all their thoughts to the study of justice, so that, wonderful to say, almost all his earls, prefects, and officers, though unlearned from their cradles, were sedulously bent upon acquiring learning, choosing rather laboriously to acquire the knowledge of a new discipline, than to resign their functions."

28. *Division of England into Counties, &c.*

Alfred, for the better administration of justice, first divided the kingdom into counties, each of which was subdivided into hundreds, and each hundred into tithings. We find no trace of this in the earlier chronicles, and it is unlikely that Asser would have overlooked so important an

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institution, if it had been introduced by the policy of Alfred. It is another strong argument against the theory, that several of the English counties occur in the chronicles long before the time of Alfred: others were evidently carved out of the ruins of the Heptarchy: and all of them came into existence at different times, according to the various circumstances which gave them birth. A striking instance in support of this theory is, that during the whole reign of Alfred, the counties of Norfolk and Suffolk were still undivided, and both formed the kingdom of East-Anglia, whilst the whole of Mercia, or at least the greater part of it, became one large earldom, the several counties, into which it was afterwards parcelled, not being yet in existence.

But, although several of the English counties are certainly older than the time of Alfred, we must not altogether hastily dismiss the express statement of Ingulf, who is a very respectable chronicler, where he is not misled by the charters of his own monastery. "The king," says he, "wishing to check and restrain robbers, was the first who changed the districts and provinces of England into counties." We may perhaps reasonably infer, that though not the original author of the division into counties, yet the king availed himself of that division to promote his own views, and perhaps arranged the administration of these counties on a more regular and systematic plan than before.

Whatever change he wrought in the counties themselves, it is less a matter of doubt that their subdivision into hundreds, and of hundreds into tithings, is one of the features of his administration. Both Ingulf and Malmesbury agree in this statement. The words of the latter may be quoted on this subject:—"Amid the sound of trumpets and the din of war, Alfred enacted statutes by which his people might equally familiarize themselves to religious worship and to military discipline. And since, from the example of the barbarians, the natives themselves began to lust after rapine, insomuch that there was no safe intercourse without a military guard, he appointed centuries, which they call 'Hundreds,' and decennaries, or 'Tithings,' so that every Englishman, living according to law, should be a member of both."

The custody of each province had been formerly in the care of the earl or alderman, who had under him an assistant officer, called *præfectus*, or *vicedominus*. These officers united the political with the judicial functions. This anomaly was soon detected by Alfred, who separated their duties,

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and appointed judges, or, as they were called in Ingulf's time, "justices," to decide causes; whilst the sheriffs, as the other officers were named, continued to exercise the duties which properly belonged to them.

Springing out of the civil division of the county into hundreds and tithings, is another institution, that of *Frankpledge*, as it is generally called, which has been ascribed to Alfred, not by any of the earlier chroniclers, but by Ingulf and Malmesbury, from whom succeeding writers have mostly copied. "If any one was accused of any crime, he was obliged immediately to produce persons from the hundred and tithing to become his surety; and if any one was unable to find a surety, he had cause to dread the severity of the law. If any one who was impleaded made his escape, either before or after he had found a surety, all persons of the hundred and tithing paid a fine to the king."

29. *Burgraves.*

Our German author has made use of this expression, which we have adopted, and we must acknowledge our uncertainty whether these functions were among those called *præfectus*, or *vicedominus*, which however we do not believe, because the etymology of that word is composed of the German words *burg*, castle or burg, and *graf*, earl or count, who, when engaged in lower functions, is also called *castellan;* but he is then only a steward, or *major domo*, and not a nobleman. The word *burgrave*, as used by Haller, seems to us to imply governor of a castle or district.

30. *Golden Bracelets hung on Trees.*

Nearly similar acts are recorded of King Edwin; also of Frothi, King of Denmark; of Rollo, Duke of Normandy; and of Briant, King of Munster.

31. *Ignorance of the Nobility.*

It sometimes happened that Alfred's earls and prefects were too old or of too dense intellect to begin learning to read. In such a case, Alfred took their sons, or some more distant kinsman, whom he instructed to read to them; or if no other person could be found, he made one of his own men, whom he had brought up to reading, undertake the office of teacher, and recite Saxon books before the ignorant noblemen, whenever they could find time for so doing. The result of this useful but to us rather humorous process was, that the nobles, in the words of Asser, "lamented with

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deep sighs, in their inmost hearts, that in their youth they had never attended to such studies; and they blessed the young men of our days, who happily could be instructed in the liberal arts, whilst they execrated their own lot, that they had not learned these things in their youth, and now, when they were old, though wishing to learn, they were unable." The ignorance and other deficiences of Alfred's judges were, however, leniently dealt with, in comparison with the punishment which the king inflicted on partiality and wilful injustice. His severity on this head has been recorded in general terms by Asser; but we learn from a work, called the "Miroir des Justices," (originally written in Norman-French by Andrew Horne, in the reign of Edward II., and translated into English in 1646,) that perversion of justice met with no connivance from this inflexibly upright king. "He hanged Cadwine, because he condemned Hachwy to death, without the assent of all the jurors, in a case where he put himself upon the jury of twelve men; and because Cadwine removed three who wished to save him against the nine, for three others into whose jury this Hachwy did not put himself."

"He hanged Markes because he adjudged During to death by twelve men not sworn."

"He hanged Freberne, because he adjudged Harpin to death when the jurors were in doubt about their verdict; for when in doubt, we ought rather to save than condemn."

In all, the author of the "Miroir des Justices," has recorded forty-four cases of punishment, more or less severe, which Alfred inflicted on those who had perverted the integrity of the judgment-seat.

Could Alfred return, after a lapse of a thousand years, upon our earth, and behold his simple and mild laws changed and confused, their administration misled, and so many abuses from the tools of their execution—the attorneys—would he find hemp enough in England to punish them?

32. *Abuse of the Confessions of, and suspicion on, a Culprit.*

Haller departs here from the point of the general German country laws, founded upon the ancient Roman laws; according to which, the accused was forced to confess his crime; and it was seldom a culprit suffered capital punishment without previously making such a confession. This was sometimes wrung from him by torture; but even after the torture was abolished, the same system of justice was

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mostly adopted. A hardened criminal has often endeavoured to escape the insidious question by obstinate denial; therefore the judge could not condemn him without a well-proved evidence, and that real, clear, and beyond doubt; but not such as is sometimes called evidence in England, where the general accuser collects five or six probabilities, or other suspicions, and pronounces them a full and incontestable evidence, so that the audience, who ought to be convinced, as well as the jury, of the innocence or guilt of the accused, are not aware, five minutes before the verdict is given, whether he will be declared *guilty* or *not guilty*.

33. *Alfred's absolute Power.*

When we consider the different occupations with which the busy mind of Alfred was continually engrossed, the question naturally occurs, how he could find time for accomplishing so many things. It may be admitted, that he possessed external advantages which had fallen to the lot of none of his predecessors, but these advantages were all of his own acquirement, and therefore, so far from explaining, they rather add to the credit of his achievements. As he prevailed in a war, which had destroyed all the other kingdoms of the heptarchy, there were no surviving rights of any one, against whom he could be a trespasser. And, as there is no authority more complete than that which follows conquest by the sword, so Alfred, having wrested the land which he ruled out of the hands of an enemy, found his authority unbounded, except by the limits of the island itself; and the tenure by which he held it was, in fact, the law of his own will. He was, consequently, not only greater than any of his predecessors, but possessed absolute power, if he thought proper to use it. If, however, he was checked by a sense of what was due to his subjects, and modified his own authority by enacting wise and equal laws, it is a subject for panegyric, and leaves his fame brighter than it otherwise would have been; for such a mode of administering the kingly authority, so far from enslaving Alfred, made him more truly powerful, and gave him the good will of his people, which was the ablest instrument he could employ for the accomplishment of his great and useful ends.

34. *Catholic Liturgy read in Latin.*

Now, after a thousand years, the Liturgy of the Catholic service is still read in Latin; and if the gothic building of the church, with the sound of instruments and voices

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elevate the soul, the manner in which the Liturgy is spoken paralyzes the effect; and the mere babbling of words, not understood by the congregation, reduces it to a mere form.

35. *Alfred's Co-adjutors in Instruction.*

Of the difficulties which lay in Alfred's path, when he at last saw peace restored, and the opportunity which he had so long desired at last offered, for improving the people whom he was called upon to govern, the isolated position, in which he stood, was by far the most formidable. Since the death of his brothers, he stood alone in the world, and was removed as far above his subjects in the qualities of the mind, as by the regal authority which he held. When he was a boy, he could not find teachers to direct his own studies, and now that he possessed the power to promote the reforms which he meditated, and to improve the social and political condition of his subjects, he had difficulty in finding persons to co-operate with him in this laudable work. This was his first endeavour, which he took every opportunity of promoting, "To procure," as Asser tells us, "coadjutors in his good designs, to aid him in his strivings after wisdom, that he might attain to what he aimed at; and therefore, like a prudent bird, which, rising in summer with the early morning from her beloved nest, steers her rapid flight through the uncertain tracks of æther, and descends on the manifold and various flowers of grasses, herbs, and shrubs, essaying that which pleases most, that she may bear it to her home; so did he direct his eyes afar, and seek without that which he had not within, namely, in his own kingdom."

It was from Mercia, principally, that Alfred obtained the assistance which he sought. "As some encouragement to his benevolent intentions," continues the biographer, "God, listening to his complaint, sent certain lights to illuminate him, namely, Werfrith, Bishop of the church of Worcester, a man well versed in the Divine Scriptures, who, by the king's command, first turned the books of the dialogues of Pope Gregory, and Peter, his disciple, from Latin into Saxon; and, sometimes, putting sense for sense, interpreted them with clearness and elegance. After him was Plegmund, a Mercian by birth, Archbishop of the Church of Canterbury, a venerable man, and endowed with wisdom; with whom came Ethelstan and Werwolf, his priests and chaplains, Mercians by birth, and men of erudition. These four had been invited out of Mercia by King Alfred, who

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exalted them with many honours and powers in the kingdom of the West-Saxons, besides the privileges which Archbishop Plegmund and Bishop Werfrith enjoyed in Mercia. By their teaching and wisdom the king's desires increased unceasingly, and were daily gratified. Night and day, whenever he had leisure, he commanded such men as these to read books to him: for he never suffered himself to be without one of them, wherefore he possessed a knowledge of every book, though of himself he could not yet understand anything of books, for he had not yet learned to read."

But it would seem that Mercia could not supply a sufficient number of ecclesiastics and teachers to gratify the "commendable avarice" of the king; the continent of Europe was searched to increase the number; "he sent messengers to procure teachers out of Gaul, and invited from thence Grimbald, priest and monk, a venerable man, and a good singer, adorned with every kind of ecclesiastical discipline and good morals, and most learned in Holy Scripture. He also obtained from thence John, also a priest and monk, a man of most energetic talents, learned in all kinds of literary science, and skilled in many other arts. By the teaching of these men the king's mind was greatly enlarged, and he, in return, gave them much riches, and honoured them with much influence." The ecclesiastics, whom Alfred thus invited from abroad, were men who had obtained a high reputation for learning in their own country. John of Corvey, in Old Saxony, was the priest and monk so famous both in literature and science, and Grimbald was Provost of St. Omer's, in France. To procure the grant of his services from his ecclesiastical superior, Fulk, Archbishop of Rheims, without whose consent he could not leave France, Alfred despatched an embassy, consisting of several bishops and others, ecclesiastics and laymen. The ambassadors bore with them large presents for the archbishop, and pledged themselves in their master's name, that Grimbald should be well received and highly honoured in England as long as he lived. Fulk, the archbishop, wrote back a letter to Alfred, in which he signified his assent to the king's request, though the loss of the eminent scholar would give much pain to himself.

Asser was a native of Wales, or, as he calls it, Western Britain, and was now invited by the king to take up his residence in Saxony.* Accordingly, he traversed the many intervening provinces which lay in his road, and, under the

* Vide note, p. 237.

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guidance of some Saxons, who had no doubt been sent to escort him, he came into Sussex, and first saw the king at the royal villa of Dene. His reception by Alfred, and the sequel of their interview, shall be told in Asser's own words.

"He received me with kindness, and, among other familiar conversation, he asked me eagerly to devote myself to his service and become his friend, to leave everything I possessed on the left or western bank of the Severn, and he promised to give me more than an equivalent for it in his own dominions. I replied, that I could not incautiously and rashly promise such things; for it seemed to me unjust, that I should leave those sacred places in which I had been bred, educated, crowned,* and at last ordained, for the sake of any earthly honour and power, unless I was compelled to do so. Upon which he said, 'If you cannot accede to this, at least let me have your service in part: spend six months of the year with me here, and the other six in Britain.' To this I replied, that I could not even promise that too easily or hastily, without the advice of my friends. At length, however, when I perceived that he was anxious for my services, though I knew not why, I promised him that, if my life was spared, I would return to him after six months, with such a reply as should be agreeable to him, as well as advantageous to me and mine. With this answer he was satisfied, and, when I had given him a pledge to return at the appointed time, on the fourth day we left him, and returned on horseback towards our own country."

Asser tells afterwards that a violent fever seized him: he made the before-mentioned arrangements, stating in his biography:—"I did as I had promised to the king, and devoted myself to his service, on the condition that I should remain with him six months in every year, either continuously, if I should find it possible to spend six months with him at once; or alternately, three months in Britain, and three in Saxony."

Asser further says that he saw Alfred after his sickness: "I was honourably received by him, and remained that time with him at court eight months; during which I read to him whatever books he liked, and such as he had at hand; for this is his most usual custom, night and day, in the midst of his many other occupations of mind and body, either himself to read books, or to listen whilst others read them. And when I frequently asked his leave to depart, and could in no way obtain it, at length, when I had made up my mind by

* Received the monastic tonsure.

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all means to demand it, he called me to him at twilight on Christmas eve, and gave me two letters, in which was a long list of all the things which were in two monasteries, called, in the Saxon tongue, Ambresbury and Banwell; and on that same day he delivered to me those two monasteries, with all the things that were in them, and a silken pall of great value, and a load for a strong man of incense; adding these words, that he did not give me these trifling presents, because he was unwilling hereafter to give me greater; for in the course of time he unexpectedly gave me Exeter, with all the diocese which belonged to him in Saxony, and in Cornwall, besides gifts every day, without number, in every kind of worldly wealth, which it would be too long to enumerate here, lest they should make my readers tired. But let no one suppose that I have mentioned these presents in this place for the sake of glory or flattery, or that I may obtain greater honour, I call God to witness that I have not done so; but that I might certify to those who are ignorant of it, how profuse the king is in giving. He then immediately gave me permission to ride to those two rich monasteries, and afterwards to return to my own country."

Besides the eminent scholars whose attendance on Alfred is confirmed by the testimony of Asser, we are told that the celebrated John Erigena, the Scot or Irishman, came with the rest to adorn the court of Alfred. This John had "long since," writes William of Malmesbury, "from the continued tumult of war around him, retired into France to Charles the Bald, at whose request he had translated the Hierarchia of Dionysius the Areopagite, word for word, out of the Greek into Latin. He composed a book also, which he entitled, 'On the Division of Nature,' an extremely useful work for solving certain perplexing but necessary questions, if we only pardon his having deviated a little in some things from the doctrines of the Latins, out of too great attention to the Greeks."

36. *Pretended Tyranny and Faults of Alfred.*

An ancient Life of Saint Neot, a kinsman of Alfred, exists in Saxon, which alludes, though vaguely, to some impropriety in the king's conduct. It says, that Neot chided him with many words, and spoke to him prophetically:— "O king, much shalt thou suffer in this life; hereafter so much distress thou shalt abide, that no man's tongue may say it all. Now, loved child, hear me if thou wilt, and turn thy heart to my counsel: depart entirely from thine un-

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righteousness, and thy sins with alms redeem, and with tears abolish."

Another ancient MS. Life of St. Neot is somewhat stronger in its expressions of reproach. It states, "that Neot, reproving his bad actions, commanded him to amend; that Alfred, not having wholly followed the rule of reigning justly, pursued the way of depravity: that one day when the king came, Neot sharply reproached him for the wickedness of his tyranny, and the proud austerity of his government." It declares that Neot foresaw and fortold his misfortunes. "Why do you glory in your misconduct? Why are you powerful but in iniquity? you have been exalted, but you shall not continue; you shall be bruised like the ears of wheat. Where then will be your pride? If that is not yet excluded from you, it soon shall be. You shall be deprived of that very sovereignty, of whose vain splendour you are so extravagantly arrogant."

It is in full conformity with these lines of Neot, that those others written by Ramsay in the twelfth century expresses also depravities of Alfred. The life composed in prose states, that Neot chided him severely for his iniquitous conduct. "You shall be deprived of that kingdom in which you are swelling; in which you are so violently exercising an immoderate tyranny. But, if you withdraw yourself from your cruel vices and inordinate passions, you shall find mercy."

The same author's biography, in Latin verse, reproaches the king's conduct as "dissolute, cruel, proud, and severe." It adds, that the king promised to correct himself, but did not; but only added to his misdeeds, and became worse; that Neot again reproved him for "wandering in depraved manners," and announced his impending calamities.

The same ideas are repeated in the fourteenth century by Matthew of Westminster, in his history, in phrases like those of Ramsay; and John of Tinmouth, about the same period, reiterates the charge in the language of the Claudius MS. Another writer of a Chronicle, Wallingford, asserts "that Alfred, in the beginning of his reign, indulged in luxury and vice; and that the amendment of his conduct was a consequence of his adversity."

Our love for truth compelled us not to omit the preceding quotation from St. Neot, on the tyranny and faults of Alfred. The assertions against the character of Alfred were intemperance, voluptuousness, and tyranny. These faults are not completely denied, even by Asser, who expresses

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himself on the occasion of the sudden downfal of the king, when Guthrum, Osketel, and Amund poured their impetuous troops into Wessex, in January 878. "The Almighty not only granted to the same glorious king victories over his enemies, but also permitted him to be harassed by them, to be sunk down by adversities, and depressed by the low estate of his followers, to the end that he might learn that there is one Lord of all things, to whom every knee doth bend, and in whose hand are the hearts of kings; who puts down the mighty from their seat, and exalteth the humble; who suffers his servants, when they are elevated and at the summit of prosperity, to be touched by the rod of adversity, that in their humility they may not despair of God's mercy, nor in their prosperity boast of their honours, but may also know, to whom they owe all the things which they possess.

"We may believe that the calamity was brought upon the king aforesaid, because, in the beginning of his reign, when he was a youth, and influenced by youthful feelings, he would not listen to the petitions which his subjects made to him for help in their necessities, or for relief from those who oppressed them; but he repulsed them from him, and paid no heed to their requests. This particular gave much annoyance to the holy man, St. Neot, who was his relation, and often foretold to him, in the spirit of prophecy, that he would suffer great adversity on this account; but Alfred neither attended to the reproof of the man of God, nor listened to his true prediction. Wherefore, seeing that a man's sins must be corrected either in this world or the next, the true and righteous Judge was willing that his sin should not go unpunished in this world, to the end that He might spare him in the world to come. From this cause, therefore, the aforesaid Alfred often fell into such great misery, that sometimes none of his subjects knew where he was, or what had become of him."

37. *Controversies concerning Oxford University.*

Historians do not agree in their assertions as to whether a university, or public seminary of learning, existed in the days of Alfred, because Asser attaches the word "school" to these institutions; and a violent controversy once distracted the literary world concerning the sense in which the word was to be understood, and whether it was not the beginning or origin of a learned institution still existing. Asser speaks of the schools wherein the sons of the nobility were brought up, like Alfred's sons, in the royal household;

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and some learned men adduced these expressions of Asser as militating against the notion that a university, or seminary of public learning, existed in the days of Alfred. Though it is most probable that the several monasteries, and other societies of monks and churchmen, would employ a portion of their idle time in teaching youth, and prosecuting their own studies; yet there is no proof that an authorized seat of learning, such as the Universities of Oxford or Cambridge, existed in England until many hundred years after the time of Alfred. Yet an attempt was made in the sixteenth century to prove, on the one side, that Cambridge had been founded by Sigebert, King of East-Anglia: and on the other, that the University of Oxford was in full operation in the time of Alfred, who himself went thither to settle one of the religious and literary controversies, which have so often disturbed its tranquillity.

Our space will not allow us to follow the antiquarians in this learned dispute, we therefore refer our readers to Dr. Giles' work, already mentioned.

38. Vide Note 9.

39. *Alfred's Military Skill.*

The system of military defence which Alfred had devised during the interval of peace was now fully tested and its utility developed. The strong position which he had taken up separated the two bodies of the Danes, and prevented their acting in concert. The citizens, also, of the different towns no longer fell an easy prey to those who attacked them, but took measures in their own defence, and even ventured to pursue their aggressors. The wisdom of the king's arrangement, by which his army was divided into two parts, so as to relieve one another, now became apparent. Besides the garrisons of the towns, an effective army was always in the field, and the others who, at the end of six months, were to succeed them, were in the meantime occupied in cultivating their lands at home. The Danes' forces, we learn, "did not venture out of their camps with their whole force more than twice; once when they first came to land, before Alfred's forces were assembled; and a second time, when they attempted to leave their stations."

40. *Sovereignty of the Seas.*

The "Sovereignty of the Seas," a purpose pursued since Alfred's time by all British rulers, has perhaps con-

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tributed considerably towards the actual grandeur of Great Britain; but at the same time it has led to many bloody wars; and when we consider the law of nations, England has no more right to the dominion of the seas than any other nation on the surface of the globe, or than a conqueror who invades another country, like the Danes in England. To the present century was destined the glory of returning to more moderate principles, and of willingly giving up a portion of the usurped rights for her own welfare, as well as that of other nations, whereby England will doubtless flourish more than by the old system adopted for so many centuries, when she was constantly at war with all other maritime powers, for which a sufficient pretence was found in the least imaginary umbrage given to England's "Sovereignty of the Seas."

41. *Alfred's Artistical and Professional Co-adjutors.*

We have already mentioned, in Note 35, the names of eminent ecclesiastics whom Alfred invited to his court, and who assisted him in the execution of his great purposes of instructing others as future teachers for his institutions. But none of the names of those artists or professional men, whom Alfred likewise invited to his shores, have come down to us. It has, however, been amply proved that he was the most skilful artist of his time, having, according to Spelman, made himself the royal crown. We may accordingly presume him to have been equally versed in other arts.

41a. *Alfred's Officers.*

The names of several of Alfred's officers have been recorded; some of them having obtained distinctions, like Odun, Alderman of Devonshire, for their victories over the enemy. The division of the kingdom into counties, for military purposes, begins more fully to display itself: thus we read of Ethelelm, the Earl or Alderman of Wiltshire; Bertwolf, Duke or Earl (for the titles have the same meaning) of Essex; Edwolf, the king's minister, in Sussex; Earl Ceolmund, in Kent; Edred, Duke of Devonshire, probably successor to the brave Odun, and several others.

42. *Parliament in Alfred's time.*

We find no exact indication of those institutions in any of the various works on Alfred and his times; our readers must therefore be satisfied with Haller's authority. That there was a parliament in Alfred's time, wherein the

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people were admitted, is partly proved by Littleton, and again contested by others, whose opinion on the subject we will notice in a future page.

43. *Alfred's severity.*

All authors agree upon Alfred's wisdom, and his skill as a ruler; but if Haller speaks of "Moderate Monarchy," it seems to us that such an expression is only applicable to the principles developed in the dialogue between Alfred and his Counsellor, given in the Fifth Book. Alfred was the most absolute monarch that ever sat on England's throne, of which, the condemnation to death of fourty-four judges in one year, is a sufficient proof. The difference between such acts and those of Nero is, that the latter acted thus to oppress the people, and gratify his own improper desires; while Alfred did it for the good of his people, and in a time when such severe means were absolutely necessary. In the "Miroir des Justices," already mentioned in p. 218, the author quotes rolls in the time of King Alfred, and among many other inflictions of the king's love of justice, he mentions several executions, which appear to have been both summary and arbitrary, and, according to our present notions, cruelly severe. It is true, that the minds and habits of every part of society were in those times so violent, that our estimation of the propriety of these judicial severities cannot now be accurately just. But yet, even with this recollection, the capital punishments, with which Alfred is stated to have visited judicial errors, corruptions, incapacity, dishonesty, and violence, which are recorded in the Miroir, strike our moral feeling as coming within the expressions of the "immoderate tyranny," which he is said to have first exhibited.

That Alfred should desire the improvement of his people, was the natural result of his own improving mind. But, if he at first attempted to effect this by violence, and to precipitate, by pitiless exertions of power, that melioration which time and adapted education, laws, example, and institutions, only could produce, he acted with as much real tyranny as if he had shed their blood from the common passions of ordinary despots; but his motives must not be confounded with theirs: he meant well, though he may have acted in this respect injudiciously. Yet no motive can make crime not criminal. However men may palter with the question to serve temporary purposes, no end justifies bad means. Cruelty and violence are always evils, and tend to produce greater ones than those they are intended to cor-

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rect. We may therefore understand from the examples mentioned by Horne, that even Alfred's better purposes, thus executed, may have attached to the beginning of his reign the charges of tyranny and cruelty, and may have produced the temporary aversion of his people. They could not appreciate his great objects. They saw what they hated. They probably misconceived, for a time, his real character, and by their alienation may have contributed to amend it. Virtue, without intending it, will often act viciously from ignorance, prejudice, wrong advice, or undue alarm. Wisdom must unite with virtue to keep it from wrong conduct or deterioration; but true wisdom arises from the best human and divine tuition, and the gradual concurrence of experience. Alfred possessed these in the latter part of his life, but in its earlier periods he had not attained them.

44. *Prerogatives of Earls.*

Of this we find no authority in any of the modern or contemporary works on Alfred.

BOOK IV.

45. *City of London Rebuilt.*

"In 886," according to Asser, "after the burning of cities and the slaughter of his people, he honourably rebuilt the City of London, and made it again habitable. He gave it into the custody of his son-in-law, Ethelred, Earl of Mercia; for all the Angles and Saxons, who had before been dispersed everywhere, or were in captivity with the Pagans, voluntarily turned and submitted to his dominion."

46. *Reluctance of the Saxons to build Castles.*

"I will say nothing," relates Asser, "of the castles, which he ordered to be built, but which, being begun late, were never finished, because the hostile troops broke in upon them by land and sea, and, as often happened, these thwarters of the royal ordinances repented when it was too late, and blushed at their non-performance of his commands. I speak of repentance when it was too late, on the testimony of Scripture, whereby numberless persons have had cause for too much sorrow after many insidious evils had been wrought. But, though by those means, sad to say, they may be roused to sorrow, and bitterly afflicted by the loss of fathers, wives, children, ministers, servant-men, servant-maids, and furniture and household-stuff, what is the use

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of hateful repentance when their kinsmen are dead, and they cannot aid or redeem those who are captive from captivity? for they are not able even to assist those who have escaped, as they have not wherewith to sustain even their own lives. They repented, therefore, when it was too late, and grieved at their incautious neglect of the king's commands, and they praised the royal wisdom with one voice, and tried with all their power to fulfil what they had before refused, namely, concerning the erection of castles, and other things useful to the whole kingdom."

But, whilst the king's ministers neglected to fulfil their master's commands, and preferred, with true Saxon blood, to face their enemies in an open field of battle, rather than retire for safety behind the walls of a fortress, the king himself zealously discharged such of these duties which came under his own immediate care, and restored the towns and cities, that were dilapidated, to more than their former condition.

Spelman seems to have thought that Alfred was the first to construct buildings of hewn stones.

47. *Foundation of Monasteries.*

Alfred had ordered that two monasteries should be built, one for monks at Athelney, a place surrounded by impassable marshes and rivers, where no one could enter but by boats, or by a bridge laboriously constructed between two other heights; at the western end of which bridge was erected a strong tower, of beautiful work, by the king's command; and in this monastery he collected monks of all kinds, from every quarter, and placed them therein.

The other monastery, a residence for nuns, was built near the eastern gate of Shaftesbury; and his daughter, Ethelgiva, was placed in it as abbess. With her many other noble ladies, bound by the rules of the monastic life, dwelt in that monastery. These two edifices were enriched by the king with much land, as well as personal property.

Besides the monasteries of Athelney and Shaftesbury, it appears that Alfred built another religious house at Winchester, called the "New Minster." Though we find nothing about its foundation in the earlier Chronicles, yet, as Winchester was the principal city of Wessex, and the place where the king held his court, it may be supposed that no pains or expense were spared to construct it with becoming magnificence. As the foundation of this monastery was only commenced a short time before the death of Alfred, it is

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described by the historian, William of Malmesbury, as having been designed, rather than built, by this king. It was placed so near the Cathedral, or Old Minster of Winchester, that the services which were chaunted in the choir of the one could be easily heard by the singing-men who were officiating in the other; and King Edward is said to have paid a mark of gold to the bishop for every foot of land that he purchased, in order to have sufficient ground for the offices and out-buildings of the monastery. The inconveniences of this great proximity were soon felt by the inhabitants of both those religious houses, and before the time of Malmesbury the building was destroyed, and the materials removed to the outside of the city, where was built the abbey of Hyde, of which King Alfred has, in consequence, often been described as the founder.

It has been often vaguely stated by different writers, that Alfred was not only a benefactor to monasteries in general, but also built many new ones: those, however, which we have mentioned are the only ones which can, on good and positive authority, be ascribed to him, though he in a variety of ways made large and valuable gifts to various other religious houses.

48. *Revenues of the Church.*

We will, in a future page, enumerate the gifts of Alfred to the church and monasteries, upon speaking of the division of his fortune (see Note 56.) Haller's remark upon the wealth of priests is but too well founded, since the whole of Europe, and even a portion of the new world, have suffered from their abuses. Even in modern times, and towards the end of the last century, in civilized France, the church having five millions of revenue from tithes, with nearly half the land of the kingdom besides, assigned only £20 a year to the parochial working clergy, while all the rest was a prey to the vices of a sinecure and dissolute hierarchy. The landed property in that country was so unequally divided, that one-third of it only was in the hands of the lay commonality, the churches and the nobles possessing all the rest.

In regard of the revenue of the Church of England, compared to that of all other Christian churches, we have a document before us, proving that the clergy of the latter, consisting of 203,728,000 hearers, receive £9,949,000; and the clergy of England and Wales, consisting of 6,500,000 hearers, receive £9,459,565, being nearly as much as the expenses of the whole Christianity in all parts of the world.

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49. *Architectural Works of Alfred.*

"In his own palaces," says Asser, "farms, and country seats, of which he had a large number, the king set a laudable example to his neglected earls and thanes; his architectural taste was lavishly displayed in the restorations and new creations, which his genius called forth in that department. These works were doubtlessly well known to his contemporaries, but the details of them have perished, or have never been written. The greatest works of man fall into obscurity, and become utterly unknown, when those who saw them with their own eyes, and were dazzled by their brilliancy, have omitted to record those facts, which alone can preserve the memory of them to posterity. What shall I say," continues Asser, "of the cities and towns which he restored, and of others which he built where none had been before? of the royal halls and chambers, wonderfully erected, by his command, with stone and wood? of his royal vills constructed of stone, removed from their old sites, and handsomely rebuilt, by the king's command, in more fitting places?" These palaces are enumerated in a future note, containing a translation of King Alfred's will.

50. *Division of the King's Household.*

The king's household was at all times arranged in three classes. His attendants were most wisely distributed into three companies, so that the first company should be on duty at court for one month, night and day, at the end of which time they returned to their homes, and were relieved by the second company. At the end of the second month, the third company, in the same way, relieved the second, who also returned to their homes, where they spent two months, until their services were again wanted. The third company gave place to the first in the same manner, and also spent two months at home. Such was the threefold division of the companies arranged at all times in the royal household.

Spelman expresses himself on this subject as follows:— "I should conjecture that the king, for his more honourable attendance, took this course in point of royalty and state, there being (as it then stood with the state) very few men of quality fit to stand before a king, who by their fortunes or dependency were not otherwhere besides engaged; neither was there in those times any great assurance to be had of any man, unless he was one of such condition, whose service, when the king was fain to use one month in the

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quarter, it was necessary for the commonwealth, that he should remit them the other two months unto their own occasions. Neither used he this course with some of his officers only, (as there are those that understand it to have been a course taken only with those of his guard,) but with all his whole attendance; neither used he it for a time only, but for his whole life, as Ingulfus expressly tells us; and I little doubt but that the use at court at this day, of officers and quarter-waiters, had the first beginning even from this invention of the king's."

51. Vide Note 24.

52. *Alfred's skill in Jewellery, and description of his Gem.* The art of working in gold and silver was a favourite subject for the king's taste and patronage. A beautiful specimen of workmanship occurs in his jewel, which has already been mentioned; and if we are to understand literally his biographer's assertion, that the king himself taught the artist to execute such works as this, it considerably augments our respect for the master-mind, which not only entered upon so many different callings, but succeeded so completely in them all. The working in gold and silver must however be interpreted to comprehend a vast extent of art and science. The mere manufacture of a bracelet, or any other ornament of the person, will hardly describe the full operation of this art; the inlaying and setting of precious stones, enamelling in all its branches, and the decorative branches of carving and gilding, may all be included in the name, and the introduction or improvement of these elegant embellishments to the residences of the king and his nobles, must have not only improved the taste, but have added to the comforts of his countrymen.

"I know not," says Spelman, "why we may not conjecture, that the king (being by the return of his East-Indian ship stored with many eastern stones, and by his especial industry upon that occasion provided also of workmen) probably fell upon the composing of an imperial crown, which, though not of the form, that by way of distinction we at this day call imperial, yet it was of a more august and imperial form than had been formerly of use in this kingdom. For in the arched room in the cloisters of Westminster Abbey, where the ancient regalia of this kingdom are kept, upon a box, (which is the cabinet to the ancientest crown,) there is (as I am informed) an inscription

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to this purpose: *Hæc est principalior corona cum qua coronabantur reges Ælfredus, Edwardus, &c.* And the crown (which to this purpose were worth the observing) is of a very ancient work, with flowers adorned with stones of somewhat a plain setting. This by the inscription appearing to have been made by him, and that when he was become universal king of the Heptarchy; in which respect, and for the value of the jewels, (then and long after very rare in these parts,) as also for the venerable esteem which (for the original and author) succeeding ages have ever had of it, it seems deservedly to be accounted the most principal crown."

The gem formerly worn by King Alfred, and now preserved in the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford, is made of pure gold, containing coloured stones, cased in a remarkably thick crystal, in perfect preservation, and only looks a little dull and dingy, for the great length of time that has passed over it. The length of the gem is about two inches, and it is about half an inch thick. Round the edge are engraved the words ALFRED MEC HEHT GEWYRCAN, (*Alfred had me worked*) in pierced gold letters. The narrow end of the gem, at which the first and last words of this inscription meet, is formed into the head of a griffin, the national emblem of the Saxons, having in its mouth a strong gold rivet, to which a chain was doubtlessly attached; and its flat form indicates that it must have been worn on the breast dependent from the chain that passed round the neck, in a way similar to ornaments which are still worn by kings and queens on state occasions.

The back of the gem is quite flat, and ornamented with a flower, wrought in gold, without stones.

The front or principal face of the relic is smaller than the back, in consequence of the edge sloping inwards a little all round, so that the words engraved on it do not stand upright, a contrivance probably adopted for the purpose of giving more effect to the front of the jewel, and making it stand out in stronger relief. The back-ground is composed of a blue stone, on which appears a human figure clothed in the green Saxon military vest or tunic, and girt with a belt, from which a strap for a sword depends towards the left side. The figure is seated on the throne, with a cyne-helm or crown on its head, and on either hand he holds a sceptre, branching out over the shoulders into fleurs de lis.

Learned men differ in their opinion: some of them pretend that the figure in the gem was a type of Alfred as king; and others assert that it represents Jesus Christ, or St.

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Cuthbert, patron of King Alfred, who assisted him in distress; but the opinion of the Rev. Dr. Silver, of St. John's College, Oxford, formerly Anglo-Saxon Professor, seems to have the preponderance. According to his view, the figure was an image of the king himself, and symbolical of his kingly office; and the two sceptres designate the spiritual and temporal authority which were united in the king's hands.

53. *Political Levers of Rulers.*

We perceive that King Alfred employed one of the first levers of rulers to attain his purposes; and to acquire the services of others, without making any real sacrifice, farther than flattering their ambition. The other lever also used by princes for the same purpose, (and at an equally little expense,) and which Philip II. and other tyrants so effectively practiced, is *fear*—a means which Alfred did not neglect, but which, be it said to his glory, he did not, like so many of his descendants and other sovereigns, abuse.

That Alfred knighted his grandson is not astonishing, since the nearest relations of monarchs are always the first distinguished by that dignity. History informs us that queens and empresses generally knighted their favourites; but of the most distinguished men, not one was ever proud enough to refuse that distinction, even from the hands of a woman.

54. *Universal Geni, and Manual Occupations of Princes.*

Nature very seldom produces geni capable of successfully practising so many different avocations; but as we possess sufficient examples in ancient and modern history, and especially in Michael Angelo, Gœthe, Frederick the Great, Napoleon, &c. of men who cultivated many different sciences, and naturally excelled in some more than in others, we cannot wonder that Alfred was likewise gifted with those qualities. What is, however, most to be admired, and what we seldom find united in such universal geni, is the tranquillity of mind that such a man must have possessed, to occupy himself so extensively and regularly with those different branches of arts and sciences; and practise them under the very clash of weapons, and amidst the troubles and desolation spread by constant warfare.

The custom that every sovereign should practice one manual occupation, has been preserved in some countries until the end of the last century; the higher sense of that

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custom being probably, that they should not forget that they descend from the people; forming a striking contrast with the usurped expression, that they obtain their power from the *grace of God.*

55. *Alfred's Zeal for Religion.*

We must remind the reader that Haller was a philosopher, and lived in the time of Voltaire, Rousseau, &c.; and that the Atheism which reigned on the continent of Europe at that epoch, can alone excuse his expression.

Alfred's zeal for religion is described as follows by Dr. Giles:—

"For the last hundred and fifty years preceding the reign of Alfred, and following the death of Venerable Bede, a great change, and not for the better, had been gradually passing over the Anglo-Saxon mind. In literature and religion, which in those days were inseparably united, the zeal which was kindled in the time of Venerable Bede, and fostered by his own bright example, had long waxed cold; no name of importance occurs during that long period; and when Alfred came to the throne, it was not the least pressing of the arduous duties that devolved on him, to raise his subjects from the inglorious apathy into which they had fallen on all that regarded their intellectual and moral culture." It was for this object above all others that Alfred had gathered from every side those pious and learned churchmen, whose names and virtues have been already enumerated.

56. *Division of Alfred's Revenues.*

He assigned the first half of his revenue to worldly purposes, and ordered that one-third of this half should be paid to his soldiers and his ministers, the nobles who resided at his court, where they discharged various duties: for the king's household was at all times arranged in three classes. To these attendants was paid:—the first of the three portions aforesaid, to each according to their respective dignities and peculiar service; the second was for the payment of the operatives, whom he had collected out of every nation, and kept about him in large numbers, men skilled in every kind of constructlon; the third portion was assigned to foreigners, who came to him out of every nation far and near; whether they asked money of him or not, he cheerfully gave to each with a wonderful munificence in proportion to their respective merits, according to what is written, "God loveth a cheerful giver."

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But the second part of all the revenues, which came yearly into his possession, and was included in the receipts of his exchequer, he, with ready devotion, gave to God, ordering his ministers to divide it again into four parts, stipulating that the first of these parts should be bestowed on the poor of every nation who came to him; and on this subject he said, that as far as human discretion could guarantee, the remark of Pope Gregory should be followed: "Give not much to whom you should give little, nor little to whom much, nor something to whom nothing is due, nor nothing to whom something." The second of the four portions was given to the two monasteries, which he had built,* and to those who therein had dedicated themselves to God's service, as we have mentioned above. The third portion was assigned to the school, which he had studiously collected together, consisting of many of the nobility of his own nation. The fourth portion was for the use of all the neighbouring monasteries in all Saxony and Mercia;† and also during some years, in turn, to the churches and servants of God, dwelling in Britain, Cornwall, Gaul, Armorica, Northumberland, and sometimes even in Ireland, according to his means, he either distributed to them beforehand, or proposed to do so afterwards, if life and prosperity should not fail him.

57. *Division of Alfred's Time.*

With equal exactitude Alfred apportioned his own time between his spiritual and temporal duties; but his biographer has not been equally minute in describing this particular, as in the division of his income. We will notice in the next note the expedient of wax lights and lanterns, to which the king had recourse for ascertaining the lapse of time. Asser informs us that he dedicated half his service to the world and half to God; but William of Malmesbury says, with more minuteness, that he employed "eight hours in writing, reading, and prayer; eight in the refreshment of his body; and eight in despatching the business of the realm." This regularity of system must have been of the greatest service to the king, and have enabled him to accomplish much more than he otherwise could have done; and it set an example to his subjects, of the utmost import-

* Athelney and Shaftesbury.

† Saxony now became the general name for Wessex, Kent, and Sussex combined. Mercia is added, because it was considered no longer a separate kingdom.

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ance to a nation, which was saved from destruction, that it might become a monument to posterity of the greatness of their king.

58. *Invention of Lanterns.*

There are so many different facts in Alfred's history which make impressions upon the mind, from their poetical aspect, that it is not surprising that his history is and ever will be popular, from his flight, his disguise, the history of the cakes, (whether fictious or not,) his entry into the Danish camp as a minstrel, his architectural knowledge, his skill in jewellery, and even from the presumed invention of lanterns. Of the latter Asser speaks as follows:—"After long reflection on these things, he at length, by a useful and shrewd invention, commanded his chaplains to provide wax in a sufficient quantity; and he caused it to be weighed in such a manner, that when there was so much of it in the scale as would equal the weight of seventy-two pence, he caused his chaplains to make six candles out of it, each of equal length, so that each candle might have twelve divisions marked longitudinally upon it. By this plan, therefore, those six candles burned for twenty-four hours, a night and a day exactly, before the sacred relics of many of God's elect, which always accompanied him wherever he went: but sometimes, when they would not continue burning a whole day and night, till the same hour that they were lighted the preceding evening, owing to the violence of the wind, which blew day and night, without intermission, through the doors and windows of the churches, the fissures of the partitions, the plankings, or of the wall, and the thin canvass of the tents, they then unavoidably burnt out and finished their course before the appointed time; the king therefore considered by what means he could shut out the wind, and so, by an useful and cunning invention, he ordered a lantern to be beautifully constructed of wood and white ox-horn, which, when skilfully planed till it is thin, is no less transparent than a vessel of glass. This lantern, therefore, was wonderfully made of wood and horn, as we before said, and by night a candle was put into it, which shone as brightly without as within, and was not extinguished by the wind; for the opening of the lantern was also closed up, according to the king's command, by a door made of horn. By this contrivance, then, six candles, lighted in succession, lasted four and twenty hours, neither

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more nor less, and when these were extinguished, others were lighted in their places."

In the above description of Asser, he says, "no less transparent than a vessel of glass." Can Asser have employed that expression? And was glass used in Alfred's time? And if so, wherefore wanted he lanterns of horn when he could use glass? The fear of straw, or any other combustible matter catching fire, (wherefore horn is now used in stables, &c.,) cannot have existed in palaces. There was accordingly no need of using it if glass could be had.

59. *Alfred's Illness.*

With respect to Alfred's illness, which began at the time of his marriage, Asser expresses himself as follows:—"His nuptials were honourably celebrated in Mercia, among innumerable multitudes of people of both sexes; and after continual feasts, both by night and by day, he was immediately seized, in presence of all the people, by sudden and overwhelming pain, as yet unknown to all the physicians; for it was unknown to all who were then present, and even to those who daily see him up to the present time—which, sad to say! is the worst of all, that he should have protracted it so long from the twentieth to the fortieth year of his life, and even more than that through the space of so many years—from what cause so great a malady arose. For many thought that this was occasioned by the favour and fascination of the people who surrounded him; others, by some spite of the devil, who is ever jealous of the good; others, from an unusual kind of fever. He had this sort of severe disease from his childhood; but once, divine Providence so ordered it, that when he was on a visit to Cornwall for the sake of hunting, and had turned out of the road to pray in a certain chapel, in which rests the body of St. Guerir,* and now also St. Neot rests there—for King Alfred was always from his infancy a frequent visitor of holy places for the sake of prayer and almsgiving—he prostrated himself for private devotion, and, after some time spent therein, he entreated of God's mercy, that in his boundless clemency he would exchange the torments of the malady which then afflicted him for some other lighter disease; but with this condition, that such disease should not show itself outwardly in his body, lest he should be an object of contempt, and less able to benefit mankind; for he had great dread of leprosy

* St. Guerir's Church was at Ham Stoke, in Cornwall.

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or blindness, or any such complaint, as makes men useless or contemptible when it afflicts them. When he had finished his prayers, he proceeded on his journey, and not long after he felt within him that by the hand of the Almighty he was healed, according to his request, of his disorder, and that it was entirely eradicated, although he had first had even this complaint in the flower of his youth, by his devout and pious prayers and supplications to Almighty God. For if I may be allowed to speak briefly, but in a somewhat preposterous order, of his zealous piety to God, in the flower of his youth, before he entered the marriage state, he wished to strengthen his mind in the observance of God's commandments, for he perceived that he could with difficulty abstain from gratifying his carnal desires; and, because he feared the anger of God if he should do anything contrary to his will, he used often to rise in the morning at the cock-crow, and go to pray in the churches and at the relics of the saints. There he prostrated himself on the ground, and prayed that God in his mercy would strengthen his mind still more in his service by some infirmity such as he might bear, but not such as would render him imbecile and contemptible in his worldly duties; and when he had often prayed with much devotion to this effect, after an interval of some time, Providence vouchsafed to afflict him with the above-named disease, which he bore long and painfully for many years, and even despaired of life, until he entirely got rid of it by his prayer; but, sad to say! it was replaced, as we have said, at his marriage by another which incessantly tormented him, night and day, from the twentieth to the forty-fourth year of his life. But if ever, by God's mercy, he was relieved from this infirmity for a single day or night, yet the fear and dread of that dreadful malady never left him, but rendered him almost useless, as he thought, for every duty, whether human or divine."

Dr. Giles speaks on the same subject as follows:—"It is generally believed, on the authority of Asser, who was Alfred's bishop, biographer, and friend, that our great king suffered much, through the whole of his life, from some internal disease, the nature of which was unknown to the physicians of his time. To inquire into the nature of this complaint seems useless, because science alone could explain it to us, and at that time the medical science, perhaps, was at its lowest ebb: and it is more consistent with the dignity of a name, that has always borne on it a halo of reverence in the eyes of mankind, to touch with a gentle hand the

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infirmities from which even the body of the great Alfred was not exempted by his Creator. Yet such was the vigour of Alfred's mind, such the submission of his body to the control of his powerful intellect and will, that the malady, from which he suffered, seems never, after its first access, to have gained dominion over him, or to have displayed itself in public. On the contrary, his energy of mind was, if possible, sharpened by the warnings of his bodily tormentor. Nor does his disease seem to have affected even the vigour of his body. An invalid can with difficulty go through the hardships of an ordinary campaign in war. But what did not Alfred encounter during the many years that he upheld, first by the side of his brave brother, and afterwards alone, the tottering condition of the West-Saxon monarchy? We have traced his reign, as minutely as our authorities will permit, through seven years, and three Danish invasions, each more formidable than the preceding. Twice the wave of conquest was thrown back from the rock on which it beat; and though at its third flow that rock was submerged by the increasing mass of waters which assailed it, yet Alfred still floated above the tide, and served as a buoy on which the eyes of his people were fixed, that they might regain their footing, and repel the hostile inundation."

There is a legend which informs us that he was cured of his infirmity by Modwen, a female saint in Ireland, whose virtues at this time excited the wonder of the world, and augmented the wealth and influence of the Church. But it is scarcely doubted that Alfred never was in Ireland: we read of no such connection between the sister islands in his time, as had existed in a previous generation. If Ireland ever was distinguished for learning in very early times, it had again become unknown to the rest of the world, until it was annexed to the English crown by Henry II., and certainly furnished no temptation to the royal family of Ethelwolf to visit it for any purpose of either religion, learning, or science.

60. *Alfred's Education.*

All authors agree that Alfred's education did not commence until he was about twelve years old; and Asser speaks of it as follows:—"He was loved by his father and mother, and even by the people generally, above all his brothers, and was educated altogether at the court of the king. As he advanced through the years of infancy and youth, his form

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appeared more comely than that of his brothers; in look, in speech, and in manners, he was more graceful than they. His noble nature implanted in him from his cradle a love of wisdom above all things, but—with shame be it spoken—by the unworthy neglect of his parents and nurses, he remained illiterate even till he was twelve years old or more; but he listened with serious attention to the Saxon poems which he often heard recited, and easily retained them in his docile memory. He was a zealous follower of the chase in all its branches, and hunted with great assiduity and success; for skill and good fortune in this art, as in all others, are among the gifts of God, as we have often also witnessed.

"Now, on a certain day, his mother was showing him and his brothers a Saxon book of poetry, which she held in her hand, and said, 'Whichever of you shall the soonest learn this volume, shall have it for his own.' Stimulated by these words, or rather by the divine inspiration, and allured by the beautifully illuminated letter at the beginning of the volume, Alfred spoke before all his brothers, who, though his seniors in age, were not so in grace, and answered, 'Will you really give that book to one of us, that is to say, to him who can first understand and repeat it to you?' At this his mother smiled with satisfaction, and confirmed what she had before said: upon which, the boy took the book out of her hand, and went to his master and read it to him, and in due time brought it to his mother, and recited it."

Historians vary as to whether the early education of Alfred was conducted by his real mother, Osburga, or by his step-mother, Judith; but it is proved that the princess Judith retired in 861 to her father's court in France, where she soon married Baldwin II. surnamed Bras-de-fer, Count of Flanders. The preceptress of Alfred must therefore have been his own mother, Osburga, living in retirement, but engaged in training the mind of her young child for the high duties which he was afterwards to fulfil.

Alfred's biographer, Asser, further says:—"He learned the daily course, that is, the celebration of the Hours;* and afterwards certain psalms and prayers, contained in a book, which he kept day and night in his bosom, as we ourselves have seen, and carried about with him to assist his prayers, amid all the bustle and business of this present life. But, sad to say, he could not gratify his most ardent wish to learn the liberal arts, because, as he remarked, there were no

* The services of the church, which belonged to the different divisions of the day and night.

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good readers* at that time in all the kingdom of the West-Saxons."

"By the liberal arts," says Dr. Giles, "were implied grammar, music, geometry, and the other sciences, which were at that time to be learnt through the medium of the Latin tongue only; for, by the universal sovereignty of Rome, the vernacular languages of the conquered nations, however they may have retained their place as the idiom of the people at large, were in every case superseded by the Latin as the language of the court, and of polite literature. Afterwards, also, when the whole of Europe was ruled no longer by the sword of the baron, but by the crozier of the bishop, the same slavery of the mind was continued; nor, after the lapse of so many centuries, has it entirely been removed, in any country of the civilized world. The Anglo-Saxons, even in the age of Alfred, and indeed earlier, as might be easily shown, if this were the place for the discussion, speedily began to emancipate themselves from the trammels of a foreign language, and they aspired, as the numerous MSS. still existing fully prove, to the honours of a national literature, in their own dialect, and consequently accessible to all. But learning, like liberty, is a plant of slow growth, and does not easily become rooted in a new soil: and by the storms which assailed the young shoot, in the age of Dunstan, and afterwards at the time of the Norman conquest, the Anglo-Saxon literature was stifled even before it had time to acquire maturity. But, when Alfred began first to turn his thoughts towards learning, the level even of Latin literature was so low, that the young prince hardly knew where to find a teacher in all his brother's dominions. The first impulse, which had been given to Latin literature among the Anglo-Saxons by the arrival of Archbishop Theodore, Abbot Hadrian, and the scholars who accompanied them in the seventh century, had been of short duration in proportion to the rapidity of its growth. The most celebrated scholar, who sprung from the seed thus planted in England, was the Venerable Bede; whose works comprehend almost every branch of the learning of his time. But that which is confined to the cloister never can be popular, nor can those writings which are consigned to the keeping of a foreign tongue, ever be understood by the great mass of the people. We have, therefore,

* Lectores, literally *readers*, probably in this passage designates teachers, professors, or, as they would have been afterwards termed, and are still called, at our Universities, *Prælectores*.

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no proof that the school of Theodore produced any sensible effect, such as a vernacular literature always produces, in softening the manners or even in enlarging the comprehension of those whom he came to enlighten. In the next generation learning fled from Britain as rapidly as she had come. The court of Charlemagne was now her favoured resting-place. Thither resorted Alcuin and Dungal, the former from England, the latter out of Scotland or Ireland; Fridugisus, and a host of ecclesiastics, whilst our own island for many years produced nothing but a tame retinue of monks, whose missals, penitentials, and rituals of every kind, still remain to convince us how unproductive was a soil which had given promise to become so fruitful.

"When we consider that Alfred had reached his twelfth year before he could even read, it appears surprising that he should ever have become a follower of literature at all. Yet the love of book-learning was so deeply rooted in the mind of Alfred, that it could not be eradicated, even by the violence of the scenes in which so many years of his intermediate life were passed. We may conceive the delight with which the king, in 880, at last relieved from his persevering enemies the Danes, hailed the opportunity, which peace would bring, for indulging in study, and encouraging his people by his example to do the same. But the vernacular literature of the Anglo-Saxons, consisting principally of poems or ballads, was the only portion of learning which as yet was open to the king. He began to learn to read at the age of twelve, but his attempts were still for many years confined to a very narrow field of operations. The main part of learning was contained in the foreign idiom of the Latin tongue, and even the ecclesiastics, in Alfred's time had almost entirely forgotten the language in which they were required to perform all their services, and where all their knowledge was to be gathered."

61. *Alfred's Books.*

In 887, when Alfred was thirty years old, he began to read the Latin language, and to apply it to the interpretation of the Scriptures. The following are Asser's own words on the subject:—

"In the same year (877) Alfred, king of the Anglo-Saxons, began, by divine inspiration, on one and the same day, to read and to interpret; but that I may explain this more fully to those who are ignorant, I will relate the long delay in beginning.

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"On a certain day we were both of us sitting in the king's chamber, talking on all kinds of subjects, as usual, and it happened that I read to him a quotation out of a certain book. He listened to it with the utmost attention, and addressed me with a thoughtful mind, showing me at the same moment a book which he carried in his bosom, wherein the daily courses, and psalms, and prayers, which he had read in his youth, were written, and he commanded me to write the same quotation in that book. Hearing this, and perceiving his ingenious benevolence, and devout desire of studying the word of divine wisdom, I gave, though in secret, boundless thanks to Almighty God, who had implanted such a love of wisdom in the king's heart. But I could not find any empty space in that book, wherein to write the quotation, for it was already full of various matters; wherefore I made a little delay, principally that I might stir up the mind of the king to a higher acquaintance with the divine testimonies. Upon his urging me to make haste and write it quickly, I said to him, 'Are you willing that I should write that quotation upon some leaf apart? For it is not certain whether we shall not find one or more other such extracts which will please you; and if that should so happen, we shall be glad that we have kept them apart.' 'Your plan is good,' said he; and I gladly made haste to get ready a sheet, in the beginning of which I wrote what he bade me; and on that same day I wrote therein, as I had anticipated, no less than three other quotations which pleased him; and from that time we daily talked together, and found out other quotations which equally pleased him, so that the sheet became full, and deservedly so; according as it is written: 'The just man builds upon a moderate foundation, and gradually passes to greater things.' Thus, like a productive bee, he flew here and there, asking questions as he went, until he had eagerly and unceasingly collected many various flowers of the divine Scriptures, with which he thickly stored the cells of his mind.

"Now, when that first quotation was copied, he was eager at once to read and to interpret in Saxon, and then to teach others; even as we read of that happy robber, who recognised his Lord, yea, the Lord of all mankind, as he was hanging on the blessed cross, and saluting him with his bodily eyes only, because elsewhere he was pierced all over with nails, cried, 'Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom;' for it was only at the end of his life that he began to learn the rudiments of the Christian faith.

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"It was at the sacred solemnity of St. Martin, [Nov. 11], that the king, inspired by God, began to study the rudiments of divine Scripture, and he continued to learn the flowers collected by certain masters, and to reduce them into the form of one book, to the best of his ability, though they were mixed one with another, until the book became almost as large as a psalter. This book he called his "ENCHIRIDION, HANDBOOK, or MANUAL," because he carefully kept it at hand, day and night, and found, as he told me, no small consolation therein."

The first Latin work that arrested the attention of Alfred was, the "Pastoral Care" of Pope Gregory. The translation of this book was entrusted to Bishop Werefrith, one of the ecclesiastics whom Alfred had invited to his court, but the preface was written by Alfred himself: it is addressed in the form of a letter to Wulfsig, and is a noble specimen of plain and simple thoughts, coming from the anxious breast of a patriot king, and endeavouring to find their way to the hearts of his people.

Another book which was much valued throughout Europe in the time of Alfred, was the work of Boethius on the "Consolations of Philosophy." Its writer, like Alfred, had been suddenly transferred from prosperity and success to abasement and misfortune. In the prison, to which the capricious tyranny of Theodoric, King of the Goths, consigned him, he possibly drew that consolation from philosophy, which he has embodied in the precepts of his delightful little treatise. Alfred, aware perhaps of the sudden vicissitudes and early death of the author, included the volume on the "Consolation of Philosophy" among the works which might instruct his own subjects. The object of the treatise is to show the vanity of riches, power, dignity, and pleasure, and their inability to confer happiness on their possessor. The construction of the work is singular, being partly in prose and partly in verse. There can be no doubt that the Anglo-Saxon translation of it is due to King Alfred: Ethelwerd, Malmesbury, and others, attest the fact, and the Saxon preface which is prefixed to the work states that "Alfred king was the translator of this book, and from book-Latin turned it into English, as it is now done." Two manuscripts of this work still exist, supposed to have been written soon after, if not during the reign of Alfred, from a collation of which the work has been printed within the last few years, accompanied with an English translation. In one of these manuscripts the metrical part of the original is

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rendered into Saxon prose; in the other the verses are translated in Anglo-Saxon metre.

In rendering this interesting moral treatise accessible to his own subjects, Alfred has by no means shown himself as a mere translator or copyist. His version is rather a paraphrase than a translation, and in many parts, where the king's feelings seem to have been more particularly in harmony with his subject, whole sentences are introduced into the work not to be found in the Latin original of Boethius.

The next work which claims our notice is Alfred's translation of "Orosius," and is of considerably greater value than either of the preceding. In executing this work, the king has allowed himself even greater latitude than in his version of Boethius. Some parts of the original he has amplified; others he has compressed; and others again he has omitted altogether. To compensate, however, for these omissions, he has inserted several new chapters altogether, two of which have attracted considerable notice: they contain a description of the principal tribes of Germany in his own time, and an account of the voyages of Othar towards the north, and of Wulfstan to the Baltic, which were achieved in Alfred's own time, and possibly by his command. These and other minor insertions amount to several pages, and show that Alfred took pleasure in the study of geography, of which also they show that he possessed a surprising knowledge, if we consider the darkness of the age in which he lived, and the distraction occasioned to his mind by the number and variety of his studies.

The voyages of Othar, or Oththere, towards the north, and those of Wulfsan to the Baltic, are described in the sixth book of this work, translated by Haller, who pretends not to have taken it from Othar's own description.

The fourth work of Alfred, and perhaps the most useful of all to his subjects, was a translation of "Bede's Ecclesiastical History of the English Nation." This was an inestimable gift to those of his countrymen who could read it, as it invested that great national work with what alone it wanted, namely, that it should be written in the language of the country of whose early annals it treated. The translation was executed on the same principles which guided the king in his other works, and is of very great use as a commentary on the original text of Bede. There are several manuscripts of it in existence, and the work has been twice printed, both times as an accompaniment to the Latin original.

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Besides these great works, a variety of shorter writings and tracts have been ascribed to King Alfred. Some of these have perished by time: others are still preserved in our public libraries, and have perhaps not yet received that minute attention which they demand.

William of Malmesbury says, that Alfred began to translate the Psalms of David, but died before it was finished.

Florence of Worcester also tells us, that Alfred translated the Bible or Testament into Anglo-Saxon, but this statement has met with no confirmation; and we may doubt whether Alfred's labours in this way extended further than to the compilation of his "Enchiridion, Hand-book, or Manual," of which Asser speaks in the passage we have before quoted.

There is an Anglo-Saxon manuscript in the Cottonian Library, containing some flowers or extracts gathered out of "St. Augustine's Soliloquies." At the end of these flowers is a sentence left imperfect by the abrupt termination of the MS. "Here end the sayings that King Alfred selected from those books which we call————."

In the Harleian Library also is a collection of Fables in Anglo-Norman verse. The authoress of this work was Marie, who lived in the thirteenth century. She says, at the end of the work, that Alfred had translated them from the Latin into English, *i. e.* Anglo-Saxon, from which she had turned them into French verse. Nothing more is known of the Fables which are thus ascribed to the king.

It appears from a catalogue of the Christ Church Library, in 1315, that among its MSS. was one entitled, "Liber Alured Regis de Custodiendis Accipitribus." "This book," observes Mr. Turner, to whom we are indebted for these notices of Alfred's minor works, "corresponds with the fact mentioned by Asser, that Alfred was accustomed 'to teach his falconers, and hawkers, and hound-trainers.'"

Mention is also made by ancient writers of the Proverbs and Parables of King Alfred. Something of this kind has been preserved by Sir John Spelman, from a Cottonian MS. which has been burnt since his time, and is no longer legible. As the precepts which have been preserved are curious and instructive, the following paragraph with which Spelman introduces them to the notice of his readers, is worthy of our attention:—

"There is in that well-known library, now Sir Thomas Cotton's, a manuscript collection of diverse precepts and instructions of King Alfred's, tending to the purpose we now

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speak of; and by the courtesy of Sir Thomas I am provided with a copy of them. But, as they are, I cannot think it fit to offer them unto the world as an instance of what the king composed. For they are not his very work in the Saxon tongue, but a miscellaneous collection of some later author, who, according to his own faculty, hath, in a broken English, put together such of the sayings of King Ælfred, as he met withal, some of them rhyming, and others (as perhaps the original was) in prose: and besides that in their order they somewhat argue the collector's want of judgment. For marshalling them no better, the copy is so faulty and ill-written, in a mongrel hand, (as well as language,) as that, unless I should, without regard, venture to trespass the truth, I dare not publish it according to the copy I have taken. Therefore, whereas there are thirty-one heads of the sayings of the king, all beginning with these words, 'THUS quoth Alfred,' I take them not all, only the beginning of them, and three or four of the first also, (which are the perfectest,) I have (to show the style and manner of them) set down, in the words that I have copied them, together with the current sense they have in speech at this day. For the residue I have taken such as I presume I read right and understand, and I have only set them down in English, noting them with figures, according to the number or place they hold among the rest.

"The beginning of them is very much to be considered; for that it importeth as if there were some assembly of the chief of both orders of the kingdom called together at Sifford (or Seafford*) in Oxfordshire, and as if the king had there consulted with his clergy, nobles, and others, about the manners and government of the people, and had there delivered some grave admonitions and instructions concerning the same, to be (as one would think) divulged throughout the kingdom. For its first mentioning the assembly, and commending the king, it saith, that he began to teach those that could hear him how they should lead their lives; and then setteth down those thirty-one heads as particulars of his teaching, confirming thereby that which we have already (from other authorities) alleged, concerning his care and travail for the instruction and reformation of his people."

* This is a mistake of Sir John Spelman. The Anglo-Saxon name of Shifford is Scifford, which is pronounced, as we still pronounce it, Shifford, and means the "sheed-ford," not "sea-ford." It is in the parish of Bampton.

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62. *Alfred's Embassies to Rome.*

Alfred, who, according to some writers, was not in favour at Rome, (a fact contradicted by his biographers,) sent annually embassies to Rome, and carried on an extensive correspondence. "We have seen and read letters," says Asser, "accompanied with presents, which were sent to him by Abel, the patriarch of Jerusalem;" and the same writer speaks "of the daily embassies sent to him by foreign nations, from the Tyrrhenian sea to the farthest end of Ireland." Even this was not the limit of King Alfred's correspondence with foreign parts. In 883, the year when Pope Martin sent to him the piece of the holy cross, the king sent two of his nobles or ministers on a mission to the East Indies. These emissaries, stopping at Rome, deposited there the alms which the king had vowed, and then proceeding on their voyage, conveyed to India a similar present for the apostles, St. Thomas and St. Bartholomew, who were supposed to have evangelized those countries. Such is the brief notice of this embassy in the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, which adds, that the king had made a vow to this effect, "when they sat down against the [Danish] army at London," and when, "thanks be to God, they largely obtained the object of their prayer after the vow." "Such a step," says the historian, Lappenberg, "on the part of a monarch of Alfred's character, will excite in us but little surprise, and even that little will be diminished, if we call to mind the pilgrimages that had long been usual to the pillar of Simeon Stylites, and many places regarded as holy, and every doubt obviated by the oriental gems brought back by his envoys, some of which were in existence after a lapse of centuries. The splendid colouring given by later historians to this mission, by making Sighelm bishop of Sherborne, and calling Æthelstan an alderman, has contributed to create doubts of its reality. Sighelm did not receive the bishopric of Sherborne till the death of Asser, twenty-seven years later."

In the year 884, Pope Martin died, and was succeeded by Adrian III. It seems as if his communications with Alfred had ended in the more regular transmission of gifts to Rome. Thus in 887 we read in the Saxon Chronicle, "This year Alderman Æthelelm carried the alms of the West-Saxons and of King Alfred to Rome." The next also, *i. e.* in 888, Beocca, the alderman, carried the alms of the West-Saxons and of King Alfred to Rome." The following year we read, "there was no journey to Rome, except that King Alfred sent two couriers with letters:"

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but in 890 the mission is again mentioned: "This year," says the Chronicle, "Abbat Bernhelm carried the alms of the West-Saxons and of King Alfred to Rome."

Sir John Spelman has remarked, "that when we consider the estimation in which King Alfred was held, even at Rome itself, it appears remarkable that, after his death, his memory was passed over without his receiving the honours and title of a saint; yet if the church of Rome had borne the same good will towards him that they have done towards others, as, for instance, towards the obscure Edmund his contemporary, King of East-Anglia, it would not have been a hard task for them to have detected in the manifold incidents of his life, as good a ground for conferring on him canonization, as they have had for many whom the popes and cardinals have sainted. The very opening of Alfred's life was remarkable, though we have lost the exact particulars; and a future pope might have with propriety adjudged the honours which he had to bestow on Alfred, if not for the benefits which he brought to mankind, yet as a confirmation of the mysterious ceremony of unction, which he had received from one of that pope's predecessors. When, also, the king sat in the desolate island, and his affairs seemed to be in a hopeless state, he was assured in a vision, as the monkish writers tell us, that he should again sit upon his throne. Even the malady with which he was bound, partakes of the same wonderful character, and might be taken as a proof that Alfred was a chosen child, whom the Lord would correct with stripes in the flesh, that He might purify him for the posthumous honours of a saint. If more was wanting to prove his aptness for such honours, it might be added, that he had exemplified in his own practice the precept of the gospel, and had given half of his revenues to God, even whilst he still exercised the functions of a king. His whole life was one continued aspiration and struggle after what was good, impeded and kept back by the persecutions of a race of heathens, whose success would have overset the bark of St. Peter with its crew, the pope, and all his cardinals. It seems remarkable that no notice was taken of his career, by those who were so amply benefitted by his virtues; and it cannot be superfluous to inquire why he was not canonized, in an age when this was the highest honour which the head of Christendom could bestow.

"The king," continues Spelman, "walked with too much knowledge and understanding, and was not so easy to be led

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by them as his father was; and, though in spiritual matters he reverenced the pope (according to the doctrine of the times) as universal vicar, yet he understood not the inferences that were afterwards built upon that foundation, but exercised his regal authority absolutely, for which cause they seem to have declined striving with him, and therefore, though it had happened that all the bishoprics of West-Saxony, viz. Winchester, Cornwall, Sherborne, Wells, and Cridda, were for three whole years vacant, and only under the care of the Archbishop of Canterbury, until the time of the king's death; yet we hear of no offence taken therefore at Rome; but when after his death they continued as long vacant in his son Edward's time, the first news of distaste that he heard thereof was a curse and an excommunication."

Dr. Giles observes hereupon, "that the Roman court never tolerated even learning or virtue itself, if it in any way opposed their own favourite opinions. It becomes, therefore, a matter of the greatest probability, that some of the reforms and ameliorations which Alfred introduced, especially as regards the numerous translations from the Latin into the Anglo-Saxon tongue, which were made by his command, would meet with coldness, if not censure, but certainly not with approbation, from the lips of the sovereign pontiff. Many of these translations were, in their subjects, closely connected with the Scriptures, which the Romanists have never, but by compulsion, allowed to be communicated to the vulgar by means of versions in the vernacular tongue."

A curious instance of correspondence occurs in Asser's Biography, under the year 884. "Pope Martin, of blessed memory, died this year; it was he who, in regard for Alfred, King of the Anglo-Saxons, and at his request, freed the school of the Anglo-Saxons resident at Rome from all tribute and tax. He also sent many gifts on that occasion, and amongst others, a large piece of the holy and venerable cross, on which our Lord Jesus Christ was suspended for the good of mankind."

"That a king," observes Dr. Giles, "of so enlightened a mind would attach little importance to the worthless bit of wood, which derived all its value from a falsehood, may be easily conceived; but the exemption from tribute for the English school was a more substantial gift, and that it was granted at the king's urgent request, is in unison with every other feature of his enlarged and thoughtful mind."

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"As like Solon," says Lappenberg, "he ceased from learning only when he ceased to live, so he anxiously provided for the education of his children and his subjects."

63. *Education of Alfred's Children.*

"The sons and daughters," says Asser, "which he had by his wife were, Ethelfled the eldest, after whom came Edward, then Ethelgiva, then Ethelswitha, and Ethelwerd, besides those who died in their infancy, one of whom was Edmund. Ethelfled, when she arrived at a marriageable age, was united to Ethelred, Earl of Mercia; Ethelgiva was dedicated to God, and submitted to the rules of a monastic life; Ethelwerd, the youngest, by the divine counsels and admirable prudence of the king, was consigned to the schools of learning, where, with the children of almost all the nobility of the country, and many also who were not noble, he prospered under the diligent care of his teachers. Books in both languages, namely, in Latin and Saxon, were read in the school. They also learned to write; so that, before they were of an age to practise manly arts, namely, hunting, and such other pursuits as befit noblemen, they became studious and clever in the liberal arts. Edward and Ethelswitha were bred up in the king's court, and received great attention from their servants and nurses; nay, they continue to this day, with the love of all about them, and show affability, and even gentleness, towards all, both foreigners and natives, and are in complete subjection to their father; nor, among their other studies which appertain to this life and are fit for noble youths, are they suffered to pass their time idly and unprofitably, without learning the liberal arts; for they have carefully learned the Psalms and Saxon books, especially the Saxon Poems, and are continually in the habit of making use of books." The schools of learning, to which Asser alludes in this passage, as formed for the use of the king's children and the sons of his nobles, are again mentioned elsewhere by the same author, as "the school which he had studiously collected together, consisting of many of the nobility of his own nation;" and in a third passage, Asser speaks of the "sons of the nobility who were bred up in the royal household." It is clear, then from these expressions, that the king's exertions to spread learning among his nobles, and to educate his own children, were of a most active and personal nature, unconnected with any institutions of a more public character: the school was kept in his own household, and not in a public seat of learning.

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Alfred died, according to the historians, in 901. His military performances are summed up, according to John Hardyne, in the following verses (Chron. f. 108 b.):—

"And in the year viii C. lxxx and eighteen
Then Alured this noble king so died:
When he had reigned xxix year clean
And with the Danes in battles multiplied
He faughten often, as Colman notified
In his Chronicle and in his Catalogue
Entitled well, as in his dialogue.
That fifty battailles and six he smote,
Sometime the worse and sometime had the better,
Sometime the field he had, as it is note,
Sometime he fled away, as saith the letter,
Like as Fortune his cause left unfeter.
But nevertheless as oft when so they came,
He countered them and kept the land from shame."

Translation of King Alfred's Will.

I. "I, Alfred King, with God's grace, and with counsel of Æthered, [a] Archbishop, and all West-Saxon wise [*men*]'s [b] witness, have thought about mine soul's health, and about mine inheritance, that me God and mine elders [ancestors] gave, and about that inheritance that Athulf,[c] king mine father us three brothers bequeathed, Athelbolde, and Æthered, and me; and, which of us soever longest were, that he take to all.

II. "But it happened that Æthelbold died;[d] and we two, Æthered [and I],[e] with all West-Saxon wise [*men*]'s witness, our share entrusted to Æthelbirhte king our relation, on the condition that he it returned to us as entire as it there was, when we two it to him entrusted, and he then so did, both that inheritance, and that he with our joint concurrence got, and that he self acquired.

III. "When it so happened that Ethered succeeded, then bade [prayed] I him before our wise [*men*] all, that we two

a. Ethelred, Archbishop of Canterbury, who died in 888.

b. The words enclosed in brackets are supplied to make sense: the witan were the senate or parliament: witness means testimony or concurrence.

c. Ethelwolf, father of Alfred, died Jan. 13th, 857-8, leaving four sons; 1.—Ethelbald; 2.—Ethelbert; 3.—Ethered; 4.—Alfred; who were successively kings of England; and one daughter, Ethelswith, who, in 851, married Burrhed, King of Mercia, and after his death in 873, became a nun at Padua, where she died in 889.

d. December 20th, 860.

e. Omitted in original, but necessary to the sense.

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that inheritance divide, and he me give mine share. Then said he me that he not easily nor might divide, for that he had full often ere [before] taken possession, and he quoth that which he of our joint concurrence enjoyed and [that which he] *f* acquired, after his days he to no man rather would give it than me, and I therewith then was well content.

IV. "But it happened that we all of heathen folk spoiled were. Then spake we two about our bairns, that they some support would require from us of those estates, as to us was given. Then were we in meeting at Swinburg: then declared we two, in West-Saxon wise [men]'s witness, that which soever of us longest were, that he give other's bairns these lands that we two self got, and those lands that to us Athulf king gave in Athelbolde's life-time; but [except] those that he us three brothers bequeathed. And of this, of us two either to other his pledge gave, whether of us longest lived, that he should take both to the land and to the treasures, and to all his possessions, but that part that of us either to his bairns bequeathed.

V. "But it happened that Æthered king died when nor shewed to me no man no inheritance-writing, nor no witness, that it any other was but as we two of witness ere [before] declared. Then heard we now many inheritance-suits: now then led I Athulf's king's inheritance-writing into our meeting at Langdene, and it they read before all West-Saxon wisemen. When it read was, then bade I them all for mine love, (and them mine pledge bade, that I of them never to none would bear ill will for that they of right speak,) and that of them none would neglect, neither for mine love nor for mine fear, that they the folk-right declare, lest any man quoth [say] that I mine kinsfolk, either elder, either younger, with wrong exclude. And they then all for right declared and quothed [said] that they no righter right conceive might nor in the inheritance-writing hear of. 'Now it all delivered is there into thine hand: wherefore thou it bequeath and give as [well to] a relation as to a friend, whether to thee liefer be.' And they all me thereon their pledge gave, and their hand-setting, that by their life, no man never pervert in none other wise, but so as I it self should say at the next day.

VI. "I, Alfred, West-Saxon King, *g* with God's grace, and

f. Omitted in original, but necessary to the sense.

g. Alfred being king at the time he made his will, it must have been made between 871, when he came to the crown, and 885, in which Bishop Esne, one of the legatees therein mentioned, died.

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with this witness, declare how I about mine inheritance will after mine day.

VII. "First, I give[h] to Edward, mine elder son, the lands at Strætneat,[i] in Triconshire,[j] and Heortigtune,[k] and the book-land all that Leofheah holds, and that land at Carumtune,[l] and at Cilfantune,[m] and at Burnhamme,[n] and at Wedmor,[o] and I am a claimant to the families at Ceodre,[p] that they him choose on the condition that we ere [formerly] expressed had; with the land at Ciwtune,[q] and that that thereto belongeth. And I him give the lands at Cantuctune,[r] and at Bedewind,[s] and at Pefessigge,[t] and Hysseburn,[u] and at Suttune, and at Leodride,[v] and at Aweltune.[w]

VIII. "And all the book-lands that I in Cent have, and at the Nether-Hisseburn,[x] and at Ciseldene,[y] give they to Wintanceastre, on the condition that it mine father ere gave, and that mine sundry fee [estate] that I Ecgulf gave in trust at the Nether-Hisseburn.

IX. "And the younger mine son[z] that land at Eaderingtune,[a] and at Dene,[b] and at Meone,[c] and at Ambresbury,[d] and at Deone,[e] and at Stureminster,[f] and at Gifle,[g] and at Cruærn,[h] and at Whitchurch,[i] and at Axanmouth,[j] and at

h. "I give—[the lands," &c.] Alfred describes most of the estates which he devises as "land," but in some places he uses the word "ham."
i. Probably Stratton in Cornwall.
j. Doubtlessly Cornwall.
k. Perhaps Hardington, in the County of Somerset.
l. Carhampton, in the County of Somerset.
m. Chilhampton, County of Wilts.
n. Burnham, County of Somerset.
o. Wedmore, County of Somerset.
p. Cheddar, County of Somerset.
q. Chewton, County of Somerset.
r. Quantock, County of Somerset.
s. Beduin, County of Wilts.
t. Pewsey, County of Wilts.
u. Hussebourne, County of Hants
v. Probably Leatherhead, in Surrey.
w. Most probably Aulton, in Wilts.
x. Nether Hussebourne, in Hants; which was afterwards given by Edward to the Cathedral at Winchester.
y. Chiseldon, or Chistleton, in Wilts.
z. Ethelward.
a. Adrington, County of Somerset.
b. There are places of this name both in Hants and Wilts, as well as in many other counties.
c. East and West-Meon, County of Hants.
d. Ambresbury, County of Wilts.
e. Down, County of Dorset, or Devon.
f. Sturminster, County of Dorset.
g. Gidley, County of Devon.
h. Crewkerne, County of Somerset.
i. Whitchurch, County of Hants.
j. Axmouth.

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Branscescumbe,[k] and at Columtune,[l] and at Twyford,[m] and at Milenburn,[n] and at Exanminster,[o] and at Sutheswerthe, and at Liwtune,[p] and the lands that thereto belong, that are all that I in Weal-district have, except Triconshire.

X. "And mine eldest daughter,[q] the ham at Welewe.[r]

XI. "And the midmost[s] at Cleare,[t] and at Cendefer.[u]

XII. "And the youngest,[v] the ham at Welig,[w] and at Æstune,[x] and at Cippanhamme.[y]

XIII. "And Æthelme,[z] mine brother's son, the ham at Ealdingburn,[a] and at Cumtune,[b] and at Crundell,[c] and at Beading,[d] and at Beadinghamme,[e] and at Burnham,[f] and at Thunresfeld,[ff] and at Æsceng.[g]

XIV. "And Athelwolde,[h] mine brother's son, the ham at Godelming,[i] and at Gildeford,[j] and at Steaning.[k]

XV. "And to Osferth my cousin, the ham at Beccanlea,[l] and Hritheranfeld,[m] and at Dicceling,[n] and at Suthtune,[o] and at Lullingminster,[p] and at Angmæring,[q] and at Fulhamme,[r] and the lands that thereto belong.

k. l. Branscomb, and Collumpton, County of Devon.
m. Twyford, County of Hants.
n. Milbourn, County of Dorset or Somerset.
o. Axminster, County of Devon.
p. Litten, of which name there is one in Dorset, and one in Somerset.
q. Ethelfled.
r. Wellow, County of Hants.
s. His "midmost" daughter was Ethelgiva, the nun.
t. Kingsclere, County of Hants.
u. Probably one of those places in Hampshire which still bear this addition to their name, *viz.* Preston Candover, Chilton Candover.
v. His youngest daughter was Elfrida, who married Baldwin II., Earl of Flanders, and dying on June the 7th, 929, was buried in the monastery of St. Peter at Ghent.
w. Willey, County of Wilts.
x. Ashton, County of Wilts.
y. Chippenham, County of Wilts.
z. Æthelm, the eldest son of King Ethelbert, elder brother of Alfred.
a. Aldingbourn, County of Sussex.
b. Compton, County of Sussex.
c. Crundal, County of Hants.
d. Beden, County of Sussex.
e. Bedingham, County of Sussex.
f. Barnham, County of Sussex.
ff. The manor of Thunderfield, in the parish of Horsey, near Ryegate in Surrey, where was formerly a castle of considerable strength.
g. Probably Easbing, in the parish of Godalming, in Surrey, the manor of which also belonged to Alfred.
h. The youngest son of King Ethelbert, who died in arms against his cousin Edward, the son and successor of Alfred, in 905.
i. j. Godalming and Guildford, both in Surrey.
k. Steyning, in Sussex.
l. m. n. Beckley, Rotherfield, and Dichling, all in Sussex.
o. p. q. r. Sutton, Lullington, Angmering, and Felpham, all in Sussex.

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XVI. "And to Ealhswith,[s] the ham at Lamburn,[t] and at Waneting,[u] and at Ethandune.[v]

XVII. "And to mine two sons a thousand pounds, to each five hundred pounds.

XVIII. "And to mine eldest daughter, and to the midmost, and to the youngest, and to Ealhswithe, to them four, four hundred pounds, to each a hundred pounds.

XIX. "And to mine aldermen,[w] to each a hundred mancuses,[x] and to Æthelm, and Athelwolde, and Osferthe, eke so.

XX. "And to Æthered alderman a sword of a hundred mancuses.

XXI. "And to the men that me follow, that I now at Easter-tide fees gave, two hundred pounds: let them give to them, and divide them between, to each as to him to belong they shall judge; after the manner that I to them now have distributed.

XXII. "And to the archbishop,[y] a hundred mancuses, and to Esny[z] bishop, and to Werferthe[a] bishop, and to the [bishop] at Sherborne.[b]

XXIII. "Eke so let them distribute for me, and for mine father, and for the friends that he forethought for, and I forethink for, two hundred pounds; fifty to the mass-priests over all mine kingdom, fifty to God's poor servants, fifty to the distressed poor; fifty to the church that I at rest [rest at]. And I know not certainly whether fees [money] so much is, nor I know but that thereof more may be: but so I ween [think]. If it more be, be it to them all common that I fee [money] bequeathed have. And I will that my aldermen and my ministers there all together be, and this thus distribute.

XXIV. "When had I ere [formerly] in other wise written

s. Ethelswitha, the wife of Alfred, and daughter of Ethelred the Great, Earl of Mercia. She survived.

t. u. Lamburn and Wantage, in Berks, at the latter of which places Alfred was born.

v. Edingdon, near Westbury, in Wilts, where Alfred defeated the Danes in 878.

w. The king's aldermen were his justices itinerant, and other great officers of his own appointment.

x. Mr. Manning says, the "mancus was about 7s. 6d. of our present currency."

y. Ethelred, Archbishop of Canterbury, who died in 888.

z. Esne, Bishop of Hereford, who died, according to Godwin, in 885.

a. Werweth was Bishop of Worcester, a man of singular learning, and employed by Alfred in translating the Dialogues of Pope Gregory I. into the Saxon language.

b. The Bishop of Sherborne was Asser, the great friend and favourite of Alfred: he wrote the Annals of that monarch's reign down to the year 893.

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concerning mine inheritance, then I had more fee, and more relations, and had to many men the writings intrusted, and in [before] the same witnesses they were written. Then have I now burned those old [*deeds*] that I recover might. If of these any found should be, let it stand for nothing: for that I will that it now thus be with God's help.

XXV. "And I will the men that land have, the words to list that in mine father's inheritance-writing stand, so as they firmest [soonest] may.

XXVI. "And I will, if I to any men any fee unpaid have, that mine relations that at least repay.

XXVII. "And I will the men to whom I my book-land bequeathed have, that they it not give from mine kin, over [after][c] their day, that it go unto the nighest-hand to me; unless of them any one bairns have; then it is to me most eligible that it go that issue on the male side, the while that any of it worthy be. Mine elder father [grandfather] hath bequeathed his land to the spear-half, and not to the spindle-half.[d] Wherefore if I have given to any female what he had acquired, then let redeem it my relations if they it while she is living have will: if it otherwise be, let it go after their day, so as we before determined have. For this reason I ordain that they it pay for, because they will succeed to my [estate] that I give may, or to female hand, or to male hand whether I will.

XXVIII. "And I beseech in God's name, and in his saints', that of my relations none, nor of my heirs none, do obstruct none of the freedom of those that I have redeemed. And for me the West-Saxon nobles as lawful have pronounced that I them may leave either free either or bond whether I will. But I for God's love, and for my soul's advantage, will that they be of their freedom masters, and of their will, and I, in God the living's name intreat that them no man do not disturb, neither by money-exaction, nor by no manner of means,[e] that they may not choose such man as they will.

XXIX. "And I will that they restore to the families at Domerham their land-deeds and their free liberty such

c. The word "ofer" appears to have been omitted in the original.

d. "Spere-healfe....spinl-healfe." The sexes are here denominated from the implements peculiar to their respective occupations; the male from the spear, the female from the spindle.

e. Alfred having manumitted divers "theowas" and put them into the condition of "ceorles," desires that his heirs would not abridge them of that liberty, but leave them to choose such man for their landlord as they wished; which all "ceorles," by the Saxon constitution, might do.

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person to choose, as to them most agreeable may be; for me, and for Elfleda, and for the friends that she did intercede for, and I do intercede for.

XXX. "And seek they also, with a living price, for my soul's health, as it be may, and as it also fitting is; and as ye me to forgive shall be disposed."

Translation of King Alfred's Proverbs, given at Shifford, A.D. 890.

From an ancient Anglo-Saxon MS. formerly in the Cottonian Library, and quoted by Spelman in his Life of Alfred: but now supposed to be lost.

At Shifford sat thanes many,
Many bishops, and many book-learned [men].
Earls wise and knights awful.
There was Earl Alfric, of the law so wise,
And eke Alfred, England's herd['s-man], England's darling;
In England he was king; them he began [to] learn,
So him they might hear, how they their life should lead.

Alfred, he was in England a king well so strong.
He was king and clerk: well he loved God's work.
He was wise in his word, and wary in his speech.
He was the wisest man that was in England.

Thus quoth Alfred, England's darling:—
"Would ye now live and long after your Lord!
And He would you [make to] know wise things,
How you might world's worship obtain.
And eke your souls unite to Christ!"
Wise were the quotations that said the King Alfred.
"Mildly I mind you, my dear friend, poor
And rich, loving, that ye all dread your
Lord Christ, love Him and like, for He is
Lord of life: he is one God over all goodness.
He is one bliss over all blessedness.
He is one man, mild master: He one folk's father [common father],
And darling: He is one right wise and rich king,
That him not shall fail naught of his will
Who Him here in world worship and honour."

Thus quoth Alfred, England's comfort.
"He may no right king be under Christ's self,
But [unless] he be book-learned, and wise of law,
And he his writs well know, and he can
Letters look himself, how he shall his land
Lawfully hold."

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Thus quoth Alfred, England's comfort:—
"The earl and the atheling too be under the king,
The land to lead with lawful deed;
Both the clerk and the knight with evenly right:
For after that the man soweth,
Thereafter he moweth;
And every man's doom to his own door cometh."

Thus quoth Alfred:—"The knight behoveth
Cunningly to mow for to work the land
Of hunger, and of death.
That the church have grith [*quiet*], and the churl be in frith [*freedom*],
His seeds to sow, his meads to mow,
His ploughs to drive to our all behoof:
This is the knight's law to look that it well fare."

So far the translation is equivalent to the original, which may be found in Dr. Giles' "Life and Times of Alfred the Great." Of that which follows, Spelman has not given the original.

Thus quoth Alfred:—"Without wisdom wealth is worth little. Though a man had a hundred and seventy acres sown with gold, and all grew like corn, yet were all that wealth worth nothing, unless that of an enemy one could make it become his friend. For what differs gold from a stone, but by discreet using of it?"

Thus quoth Alfred:—"A young man must never give himself to evil, though good befals him not to his mind, nor though he enjoys not everything he would: for Christ can when He will give good after evil, and wealth after grace. Happy is he that is made for it."

Thus quoth Alfred:—"A wise child is the blessing of his father. If thou hast a child, while it is little, teach it the precepts that belong to a man; and when it is grown up it will follow them; then shall thy child become such as shall recompense them; but if thou lettest him go after his own will, when he cometh to age it will grieve him sore, and he shall curse him that had the tuition of him: then shall thy child transgress thy admonition, and it would be better for thee that thou hadst no child; for a child unborn is better than one unbeaten."

Thus quoth Alfred:—"If thou growest into age, hast wealth, and canst take no pleasure, nor hast strength to govern thyself, then thank thy Lord for all that he hath

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sent thee, for thy own life, and for the day's light, and for all the pleasures he hath made for man; and whatsoever becometh of thee, say thou, come what come will, God's will be welcome."

Thus quoth Alfred:—"Worldly wealth at last cometh to the worms, and all the glory of it to dust, and our life is soon gone. And though one had the rule of all this middle world, and of the wealth in it; yet could he keep his life but a short while. All thy happiness would but work thy misery, unless thou couldst purchase thee Christ. Therefore, when we lead our lives as God hath taught us, we then best serve ourselves. For then be assured that He will support us; for so said Solomon, that wise man:—'Well is he that doeth good in this world, for at last he cometh where he findeth it.'"

Thus quoth Alfred:—"My dear son, set thee now beside me, and I will deliver thee true instructions. My son, I feel that my hour is coming. My countenance is wan. My.....My days are almost done. We must now part. I shall to another world, and thou shalt be left alone in all my wealth. I pray thee (for thou art my dear child) strive to be a father and a lord to thy people, be thou the children's father and the widow's friend, comfort thou the poor and shelter the weak; and with all thy might, right that which is wrong. And, son, govern thyself by law, then shall the Lord love thee, and God above all things shall be thy reward. Call thou upon Him to advise thee in all thy need, and so He shall help thee the better to compass that which thou wouldst."

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BOOK V.

64. *Alfred's Generosity towards his Female Prisoners.*
We find no indication of this act of generosity in any of the ancient records.

65. *Attachment of Subjects to their Sovereigns.*
This general thesis, applied by Haller to the Saxons, saying that they "are not worse than any other people; and if they are ungrateful [to the sovereign] the source lays in the unbalanced constitution of the state," may equally well be applied to all such nations as are obliged to rise in open revolt—an action it is not our purpose to defend—as was the case not only in France, but throughout the whole continent of Europe. We are fully aware of the attachment which the Prussian and Austrian subjects bore, and may still bear, to every offspring of the imperial houses; and also their moderation and long forbearance before actually breaking out. We are also perfectly assured that they will, in spite of the acquired privileges and strenuous exertion of the ultra-liberal faction, return to their monarchs that love which, in a moment of agitation, they have withdrawn from them, and the more so if sovereigns will but appreciate the spirit of the time more than they now seem to do.

The same may be said of any government that *does not keep pace with its time.*

66. *Remarks on Aristocracy.*
A government, founded upon aristocratic principles, where the administration of the state is committed into the hands of a few leading men, if more feasible, is more dangerous than any other form, for tyranny always has been, and is, indeed, its necessary result, and of the worst kind, because its tyrants are multiplied; for if the very end of government is to protect man from the rapacity of his

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fellows, and if the stronger will ever take from the weak that which he possesses, if it falls in with his desires, it is evident that the same principle will apply to any number not identical with the community. What is applicable to an individual is applicable to several; and if powers are put into the hands of even a small number, which renders them stronger than the rest of the community, they will wrest from it whatever they shall think necessary for the gratification of their desires. By this means the end of government would be defeated: the unfitness, therefore, of such a mode of government rests on the basis of demonstration; its distinctive advantage is wisdom in council, which is more likely to be found in this species of government than any other, but there is less honesty than in a republic.

We find an excellent article in a little work lately published, which expresses itself on natural and artificial aristocracy as follows:—

"There is a natural aristocracy of ability and desert that has a constant tendency to rise into power, however it may be repressed or levelled down for a time by political constitutions. It is in truth the principle of progress, and its development neither can nor ought to be resisted. Industry and skill will accumulate property, that is the aristocracy of wealth; probity and honour beget confidence, that is the aristocracy of character; talent and acquirements inspire admiration and deference, which constitute the aristocracy of intellect. These elementary differences pervade every walk and division of civil life, and no dozen men can be found associated in any pursuit or occupation in which one at least does not evince superior claims to precedence and direction. It is the order of nature, part of its constitution; just as a sprinkling of gold and rubies in the mineral world; and the virtue is almost as great in yielding to such legitimate superiorities as in the possession of them.

"But an aristocracy of prescriptive or hereditary privileges admits of no such defence. It may have been useful and just in its first foundation; but the rendering it perpetual is an infringement of the common rights and interests of men. It is seeking to make a property of that which, from its own nature, cannot be appropriated, any more than the light of the sun or the universal atmosphere. If public worth and services could be made transmissible, then might the rewards which society willingly annexes to them be made transmissible also. But this is impossible. Honour or shame, intellect or hebetude, competence to serve the common-

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wealth or the contrary, form attributes of mind and disposition, that can be as little interdicted as guaranteed, as the exclusive inheritance of any order, family, or individual. Clearly then, honours, distinctions, and political ascendancy, ought not to be tied up in perpetuity in any class; they are the prizes of life, the stimulus to laudable acts and noble deeds, and ought to be free to reward the most deserving. Any other arrangement is inimical to social meliorations, fixes an artificial aristocracy in place of the natural one of desert, with which it is for obvious reasons in antagonism, and whose active competitions, that really tend to the advance of civilization, it constantly tries to stifle or paralyze, for the sake of perpetuating its own usurpation."

We do not altogether partake of the latter remark. It is true that it would flatter the opinions of a great many philanthropists, if privileges and distinction attained by birth were to cease, and equality resume its place among all men. But would those subjected to these nobles be the more happy for it? No. Other kinds of aristocracies would form themselves, and oppress them even more than the nobles by birthright. This judgment is the more impartial, since we have witnessed, in former years, (while sojourning in the various countries,) the arrogance of Hanoverian nobles, and of the young Prussian chivalry, and also observed other German noble races, as the proud but well-educated Saxons, the simple and good-tempered Pomeranians, the intelligent Silesians, the civilized Courlanders, the quarrellous Poles, the *knouting* Russians; and, in the more southern parts, the innocent low—and spoiled high—nobles of Austria, the bigoted Bohemians and Belgians, the bragging Italians, and the beggarly pride of inflated Hungarian hussar-nobles, and grave Spanish hidalgos. But we have also been acquainted with highly distinguished members of British aristocracy, and of the *faubourg St. Germain;* and we are perfectly convinced that a part of the nobler inspirations of these individuals may be attributed, not only to their superior education, but to their hereditary reputation, the honour of which they are obliged to preserve. Without pretending that they are possessed of *more* virtue than any other class of men—*less* might even be a more appropriate term—they mostly act with a delicacy that conceals their faults and makes them less felt.

It is, besides, mere prejudice to believe that the nominal descendants of most of the ancient houses are really considered as succeeding generations, or that they have enjoyed

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their privileges for so many centuries past; for merit and circumstances have long since raised new houses to replace them.

As the members of the aristocracy in most of the European states are employed by the nation in war, and venture their lives and limbs for the defence of their country, the nation owes more gratitude to their patriotism, their delicate sense of honour, and enlightened minds, than to the blind multitude whom they lead, and who are only used as tools; it can therefore, with justice, allow them some privileges. Mirabeau defines the nobility as "that part of the nation to which the prejudice of valour and fidelity has been particularly entrusted;" and another French author says that "the world has fought for seven hundred years almost constantly for political or religious motives. Men fight in France, Spain, Italy, Sicily, England, Germany, and Flanders, from castle to castle, from town to town, from country to country, by land and by sea, everywhere and unceasingly, with a ferocity that alarms, and a perseverance that astonishes." And, noticing the reproach of privileges, he adds, "there *is one of which* the French aristocracy *has always shown itself particularly jealous, it is that of shedding its blood for its country—à celui-là, elle n'y a jamais fait forfait.*"

Four of the Chatillon fell at St. Jean D'Acre in the second Crusade; five of the same house on the single field of Agincourt, where nearly ten thousand French of gentle blood were slain. At Courtray, four thousand five hundred knights, and at Cressy, twelve hundred fell. Our own wars of the roses were murderous to the princes and nobles engaged in them. In the reign of Henri IV. it was a matter of record that, during the eighteen years preceding, seven or eight thousand gentlemen had been killed in duels, as would appear from the *lettres de grâce*, expedited from the chancery in that period. There were often six seconds of a side, all of whom engaged on these occasions. Nor were the wars of Louis XIV. without fatal effect upon more modern houses.

The average duration of the elder branches of the male line of the French nobility, of three hundred and eighty noble houses, appears to have been about three hundred years; the average number of descents in these three hundred years is ten. Out of two hundred and thirty houses there were but twenty in which nine or ten descents took place through the elder sons, and only seven where such descents amounted to eleven or twelve.

"Man, being in honour, abideth not," wrote the Psalmist.

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It might be transposed, "Being in honour, he will not abide, except in it and with it." He will not marry to condemn his issue to a discreditable poverty; he will neither impose existence on others, nor submit his own to conditions which depress his sense of the position in which he was born.

Say what we will, men who have filled a distinguished position in society, or in the world, feel the wish of surviving beyond the grave, and of leaving behind them some living representative of their name and race, which shall not descend into the tomb with themselves. And yet, in spite of this desire, so strongly implanted in the bosoms of men of every nation and belief, one finds the lineage of great historical names in most countries have long ceased to exist. In Spain, France, Holland, and Zealand, the old families are nearly all extinct. In Switzerland, William Tell's female descendants became so in 1720. In France, in order to prevent it, nothing was more common than the adoption of collaterals, the issue of females, on condition that the name of the family should be assumed and continued. "Perhaps there was in this excusable desire a secret sympathy with the national pride; for the prince found in it an additional ornament to his throne, and the country became identified with the glory of its chiefs."

If it be natural that the last representative of an illustrious house should regret its extinction with his demise, and try all means of perpetuating it, it is not less so that a whole nation should lament the loss of the men whose pen, or whose sword have ennobled or defended it—that deprived of their presence, it should still fondly attach itself to their name, and that the fiction which preserves them in the midst of their countrymen should be equally agreeable to the memory and the gratitude of the country.

These remarks on the French nobility are applicable to most of the European states, but whether they are likewise so to that of Great Britain and the British army, is a question which we leave to the reader's own judgment to decide.

67. *Silk Garments in Alfred's time.*

Haller allows Amund to speak of silk as of an unknown tissue to Alfred; but historians, whose veracity may be relied upon, inform us, that that material was in use among the Anglo-Saxons soon after their establishment in Britain; but so expensive an article, we may reasonably suppose, must have been confined to the highest rank of the people. Coronation vestments and mantles, the external garments

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of the dignified clergy, and the robes of the queens and princesses were often made of this valuable material, it was also used for the adornment of altars, and for other religious purposes.

68. *Monarchical Power does not originate from Adam.*

Ancient Christian writers pretend that "monarchical power originated from Adam, and his title of sovereignty was founded by creation, and also by donation, and likewise the inheritance of monarchy." This origin of monarchy was not a moderate one, but an absolute monarchical power allotted to Adam. And an author of the end of the 17th century endeavours to prove: "*Firstly*, that this *power of Adam* was not to end with him, but was, upon his decease, conveyed entire to some other person, and so on to posterity. *Secondly*, that the princes and rulers now on earth are possessed of this *power of Adam* by a right way of conveyance derived to them."

We have extracted these sentences from Locke's "Two Treatises on Government," wherein he contradicts "the false principles and foundations of Sir Robert Filmer and his followers" with great spirit and philosophical reasons. We regret that our space does not allow us to give as many extracts from it as it were otherwise our wish to do, and will therefore at present confine ourselves to the paragraph 105 of his "Essay on Civil Government:"—

"I will not deny, that if we look back as far as history will direct us towards the origin of commonwealths, we shall generally find them under the government and administration of one man. And I am also apt to believe, that where a family was numerous enough to subsist by itself, and continue together, without mixing with others, as it often happens where there is much land and few people, the government commonly began in the father, for the father having, by the law of nature, the same power with every man else to punish, as he thought fit, any offences against that law, might thereby punish his transgressing children, even when they were men and out of their pupilage; and they were very likely to submit to his punishment, and all join with him against the offender in their turns, giving him thereby power to execute his sentence against any transgression, and so in effect make him the law-maker and governor over all that remained in conjunction with his family. He was fitted to be trusted; paternal affection secured their property and interest under his care, and the

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custom of obeying him in their childhood made it easier to submit to him rather than to any other. If, therefore, they must have one to rule them, as government is hardly to be avoided amongst men that live together; who so likely to be the man as he that was their common father, unless negligence, cruelty, or any other defect of mind or body made him unfit for it. But when either the father died, and left his next heir, for want of age, wisdom, courage, or any other qualities, unfit to rule; or, where several families met and combined together; there, 'tis not to be doubted, but they used their natural freedom to set up him whom they judged the ablest and most likely to rule well over them. Conformable hereunto we find the people of America, who living out of the reach of the conquering swords and spreading domination of the two great empires of *Peru* and *Mexico*, enjoyed their own natural freedom, through *coteris paribus*, they commonly prefer the heir of their deceased king; yet if they find him any way weak or incapable, they pass him by and set up the stoutest and bravest man for their ruler."

69. *Honour and its meaning.*

It is an established fact, that comfort produces cowardice, and that "the delicate sense of honour" exists and must exist to a far greater extent with warriors, the nobility, their descendants, and with those nations where every man is obliged to be a soldier, and is destined to begin his career in the practice of arms, than with such as are given to domestic occupations only; but the word "honour" is not more accurately defined than the word "beauty," varying according to country and taste; nor is it clearly demonstrated whether it implies *external* distinction or the *inner* worth of man. "The delicate sense of honour" which characterizes some nations is too often confounded with *amour-propre*, which makes a duel the immediate consequence of the slightest offence; and although that exaggeration has certainly its share of good, we maintain that *probity*, impregnated in the heart of man, should be far more esteemed than the feeling of *false honour*. By the expression which our author attributes to Alfred, that "*life becomes a burthen if spent without honours*," it is manifest that *external* honour alone is meant.

70. *Conscription, and Purchased Commissions.*

We cannot agree with Alfred here, as we have many examples of the most valiant warriors rising from mere

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countrymen. Such can naturally seldom be leaders, since they fail in the knowledge required thereto. Yet we believe that in every state men should be brought up so as to be able to defend the country in case of necessity, whereby standing armies might be reduced. (Is it from fear that such a system has not been used in the latter times in England?) We are not defenders of general conscription, as it was introduced into France by Napoleon; for we have closely witnessed its evils, even in France, and in some parts of Germany subdued by the French emperor; but we have also witnessed the very great advantages that arise from the three years' military service every Prussian must perform, which, however, does not prevent him from following his civic occupation, and gives to young men a regularity in employing their time, and a physical and moral education which otherwise many would not acquire.

On the whole continent of Europe the custom of becoming a hero by paying down a sum of money has been abolished, and military commissions are only now sold in England.

We leave it to others to make more ample commentaries on this subject.

71. *Momentary Inspirations in the People.*

In note 69, we have given our opinion upon "the sense of honour spread over the whole population;" and, alas! our terrestrial world does not at all seem to be fitted for that feeling to be spread *over the whole population*; and if it does for a short time, and "every citizen glows for victory with the same ardour that inspires a general," (of which the history of ancient and recent times furnishes us with many examples;) human nature and human wants are so constructed that it cannot continue for any lengthened period. The heroical inspiration in the lower classes soon evaporates or takes false directions, therefore it is better (as they mostly do) for them to return to their own peaceable occupations.

72. *Nation of Shopkeepers.*

Amund observes, that "among the Serens there are too many shopkeepers and artisans." And Napoleon called the British "a nation of shopkeepers." Both had probably the same idea in using those expressions; for the lower kind of trade admits, in truth, of no elevation of mind, which varies in man according to his occupation; and notwithstanding

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our esteem for men in general, (to whatever class they may belong,) we cannot deny that constant occupation in minor matters, with the apparent necessity of practising a little fraud, abases man so low as to disregard probity; and for that reason we consider a working man as much higher than a shopkeeper. But Napoleon, who very well understood military tactics, politics, and something of fine arts, does not seem to have—nor that he ever would have—conceived the poetical and superior side of high trade. It is not profit alone that induces men to undertake great mercantile enterprises. There is a charm in the combination and execution of extensive mercantile transactions, in which one man employs innumerable branches. Foreign settlements, productions, ships, circumstances of war and peace, famine and abundance, are all instruments for the execution of his will; and he holds the thread of all the different means which he employs, and calculates their strength and effects as well as Napoleon did that of his different *corps d'armeés*. The high trade is really a grand occupation, but its abuses alone abase man; and a nation as England *was* at the end of the last century—the highest in the world—cannot be compared to one of "shopkeepers."

But with all the credit that we give to the high station of the merchant in society, we cannot deny that while he remains in commercial activity, he is unfit for public business; his mind is wholly engrossed with fear and hope, not only in business time, but in every moment that he is awake—in his dreams—in the circle of his family and friends—in places of public amusement, and perhaps even of worship; as it is almost impossible for a man, whose existence depends partly on chance, to suppress these ideas, which constantly occupy him: and if merchants rise to high public functions, and remain at the same time in mercantile business, examples have already proved that the latter must suffer from it. As concerns shopkeepers, Montesquieu relates that, "Tout bas commerce etait infâme chez les Grecs. Il aurait fallu qu'un citoyen eut rendu des services à un esclave, à un locataire, à un étranger: cette idée choquait l'esprit de la liberté grecque. Aussi Platon veut-il, dans ses lois, qu'on punisse un citoyen qui ferait le commerce."

73. *Moral Degradation produced by Comfort.*

Notwithstanding our observations on the high trade in the foregoing note, we cannot conceal that almost every trading nation sinks to the degree expressed by the words

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in page 89, as history informs us of the Carthagenians, Venetians, &c. The acquired wealth of some individuals weakens and enervates their nobler minds; and competition compels others to think "merely of the means of subsistence." Both consider comfort as of essential, and honour of secondary importance, to human existence; and both must be aroused by adverse circumstances to consider them in any other light.

74. *Chinese Sages.*

We must remind the reader, that this was written in the last century, and before the last Chinese war had taken place; a war which, notwithstanding the cruelties the Europeans then thought themselves obliged to commit, and which we would never defend, has been productive of much good to the trade of Europe and other countries.

To the sages and great princes mentioned in page 90, we must add the name of the Emperor Kang-he, the second of the present dynasty, who wrote the sixteen maxims, entitled "The Sacred Edict;" on which his son, Yoong-Ching, wrote an amplification, which he published in the second year of his reign, and ordered to be read publicly to the people on the first and fifteenth of every month. This work may be considered as of very high rank in the light of political morality; and we will, for that reason, sometimes have to refer to it.

75. *Comfort produced by Industry and pure Pleasure.*

By importing from all parts of the globe the rich productions of nature and culture, industry might indeed produce treasures beneath a cloudy sky, which creates a comfortable home and a social assembly around the humble hearth, that replaces the felicity afforded by countries more favoured by nature. While we acknowledge all this, and endeavour to deceive our imagination by brilliant gas-light and the warm tint of a brush, which represents to us, in the opera-house or diorama, the charming features of a southern scenery, we cannot, however, suppress the ardent desires of living under a milder zone, and breathing the balmy odour of the country "in which the lemon grows," and where the sky almost constantly shines in brilliant azure.

76. *Linen Garments among the Anglo-Saxons.*

Linen certainly formed a very large part of the Anglo-Saxon habits: it was an article indiscriminately worn by

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every class of people whose circumstances allowed them to purchase it, and was particularly appropriated to such garments as were worn next the skin. The use of linen is of high antiquity among the Saxons; for a writer of their own, who flourished in the eighth century, informs us that the militia tunic in his time consisted of linen. Another ancient writer, describing the manners of the Longobards, says their vestments were loose and flowing, that they consisted chiefly of linen, like those of the Anglo-Saxons, and were ornamented with broad borders, woven and embroidered with various colours.

Our German author attributes the perfection of embroidery, and that to the very highest degree, to a southern princess; we must however here observe, that he makes an historical error if he does not admit that art to have been excelled in by the Anglo-Saxon ladies, for it is certain that garments ornamented with needlework were held in the highest estimation by the Anglo-Saxons: and it is equally certain that the Saxon ladies excelled in the performance of these elegant manufactures. "The French and Normans," says an ancient author, "admired the beautiful dresses of the English nobility; for," adds he, "the English women excel all others in needlework, and in embroidery with gold: gesta gulielmi ducis apud ducken," p. 21. Another writer tells us, that "The Anglo-Saxon ladies were so famous for their skill in the art of embroidery, that the most elegant productions of the needle were called, by way of eminence, *the English work.*"—Strutt, 74.

77. *Modern Despots.*

Our author has pictured such an absolute monarch in "Usong," a Persian despot, who carefully watches over all his servants, holding the reins of government in his own hands, and knowing how to bridle the power of his officers, so that no injustice or oppression towards his subjects can be committed without being severely punished. "Usong" is not a mere fiction, for that prince lived in the fifteenth century. In modern history we find Peter the Great, Frederick II., and Napoleon, rulers, who from their sagacity have done as much for their people, and have governed as well as the best constitution where all classes are represented. The faults of Napoleon, as a monarch, paralyze to a certain degree his valour as a hero, and consequently place him, in many instances, below the two former sovereigns. We however see, in the dynasties of the Chinese

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emperors, many a ruler who possessed all the attributes of severity and lenity, and who exerted himself to the utmost in order to spread happiness throughout his over-populated dominions. But as nature seldom produces men who combine all the requisite qualities of a regent, (and history pictures to us by far more weak monarchs than such as deserved to be placed at the head of a nation,) it is naturally better for European countries that their power be checked by parliament and other governmental bodies, if not to do good, at least to prevent evil.

78. *Pastime of Sovereigns.*

We do not envy the leisure of sovereigns, and the diversions which they permit themselves; it is a curious vanity of a people whom we need not seek far, governed under a constitutional form, to prefer bearing the heaviest burdens, (believing that they govern themselves,) rather than allow their sovereign to meddle with the government; neither do we envy the function of the reporter of the "Court Circular," who presents to the eyes of a laborious people trifling actions, which are in reality not worth mentioning in newspapers; and which it were perhaps far better to pass under silence, as is done in other countries.

79. *Family Government.*

MONTAZGO. (*bas à Ubilla.*)

"Je vous ai demandé sur la caisse aux reliques
De quoi payer l'emploi d'alcade à mon neveu."

UBILLA. (*bas.*)

"Vous, vous m'aviez promis de nommer avant peu
Mon cousin Melchior d'Elva bailli de l'Ebre."

MONTAZGO. (*se récriant.*)

"Nous venons de doter votre fille. On célebre
Encore sa noce.—On est sans relâche assailli . . ."

UBILLA. (*bas.*)

"Vous aurez votre alcade."

MONTAZGO. (*bas.*)

"Et vouz votre bailli."
(*Ils se serrent la main.*)

["RUY BLAS," Act iii. Scene I.]

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80. *Sovereigns driven from their Thrones.*

Comme l'art d'ennuyer est celle de trop dire; we will not quote examples of such princes driven from their thrones in the latest epoch.

81. *Aqua Toffana.*

We may congratulate ourselves that modern history does not present us with instances of governors like Nero and the family Borgia, but we deplore that the *aqua toffana* has been, even to the end of the last century, a political vehicle employed both in an imperial and a royal court of Europe.

82. *Dissipation and False Economy.*

It is a false application of economy that blames the dissipation of money in pageants, banquets, and insignificant solemnities. The money spent in that way returns more directly to the people than by any other channel; and it is better for the court to spend more than its income, than to hoard it up, or purchase foreign stocks, in which consists a dead capital, of no use whatever to the nation, whose members have, at the sweat of their brow, contributed to the civil list. If we suppose that sovereigns consume the rarest dishes and the choicest wines, what they consume themselves can be but very little. And all that is spent in splendid buildings, rich paintings, fêtes, and even with their *maitresses*, (who seldom treasure up the money) returns in some way or other to the nation, even if that money be spent in foreign countries, it cannot be considered as thrown away. All nations are in direct or indirect commercial transactions with each other, and hence such capital returns in general traffic. The only evil is, that the amount of the civil list is mostly contributed by those upon whom it falls heaviest, and who must bear the greatest sufferings; and it is the disproportion which exists between the receipts and the expenses that produces the evil, and not the expenses themselves. The words of a French king that "*chaque paysan devoit avoir le Dimanche un poulet dans son pot-au-feu,*" are really greater than they are generally considered to be; and we only wish they were everywhere realized.

83. "*J'ai le droit et j'en use.*"

Everywhere, and even in countries subjected to a constitutional government, and perhaps there more than in others, public officers abuse the maxim, "*J'ai le droit et j'en use,*" and this is the source of many evils. There is no sufficient and powerful control over them. The blame, which in very

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rare cases falls upon others through the public papers, and in still rarer cases through the legislative body, is not sufficient to check these abuses, for in most instances there is no majority to censure them, and none to punish them, for "*eine Krâhe hackt der andern kein Auge aus.*" In absolute monarchies, the sovereign sometimes punishes the abuses of power, and the fear of it contributes still more to prevent them.

84. Vide note 80.

85. *Former and actual Punishment of unjust Princes.*

Modern history gives us similar examples in the deplorable events that took place under Charles I., King of England; Paul, Emperor of Russia; Gustavus III., King of Sweden; and Louis XVI., King of France; but human progress in civilization prevents us from acting with such cruelty, and we are satisfied when princes abuse their power, *de les chasser*, as was done with Charles X., and others.

86. Beware! beware! beware!

87. *Expression of the unfortunate Louis XVI.*

The British constitution represents, in truth, that barrier to the absolute will of princes, which at the same time watches over his security; and there is no doubt that the despotic monarch is far more unhappy than the prince who is bound by laws.

A man of talent, and possessed of a knowledge of the world, has attributed the following words to Louis XVI., at the time of the French revolution of 1789, his object being more ironical than real, but by ridiculing the inactivity and the limit of a constitutional monarch, he has, in truth, described the happier situation of such a sovereign, compared to that of him who has to bear almost alone the whole weight of the governmental power.

"You may," said Louis XVI., "be in future the legislators, and I will provide for the execution of your laws, if you will only give me sufficient absolute power to force the contumacious, and this you can do, as you are now the masters. You can tear them to pieces with your teeth, even quarter them, without any legal proceedings. For what power in the world can oppose your will? You will, as soon as you have taken my place, really reign and govern. The nobility and the clergy will indeed object to it, but

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their proportion is only as one to twenty-five. You must clip their rights, so that they shall be no longer able to draw you within the circle of their power and do you injury. To obtain this object, reduce the pride of the priests, thereby granting the offices of the church to your equals, and allow them no more than is strictly necessary for their subsistence.

"With regard to the nobles, you need not take the trouble to impoverish them, it will be sufficient that you no longer respect their inherited titles and dignities, to make their prerogative vanish totally. Take an example from the wise contrivances of the Turks: as soon as those noble sirs cease to bear the titles of a duke or marquis, they will, to distinguish themselves, dissipate their fortunes in splendour and magnificence, which will conduce to the profit of the nation. Then their wealth will enter into general circulation, and advance trade. My ministers will in future be forced to a wiser conduct, when they are answerable to you for their actions, and it cannot be longer my duty to examine their capabilities. I certainly appoint them according to the exterior form, but, as soon as you please, I immediately drive them away. Thus will that tyranny also cease, which these ministers employed even against myself, by requiring that I should follow their counsels, and by exposing me considerably, inasmuch as they made use of my name in circumstances which involved the state into difficulties. I submitted quietly for a long time, but at length it became impossible, and I am now liberated from them.

"My spouse, my future children, my brothers, and my cousins, who call themselves princes of the blood, will certainly, I know it, condemn me, but only in silence; and they cannot say so to myself. Now that I am placed under your high protection, I can oppose them better than when they were only mine, and only considered my protection and my defence. But *I* have now done my duty in assisting you to lay before the world the superfluity of this protection. The discontented, who have taken their domicile on the other side of the realm, will return, sooner or later, as they think proper. They call themselves my real friends, but that I must laugh at. My true friends can only be those who accommodated their manner of thinking to mine. To the former, nothing in the world is of importance and worthy of consideration but the old right of my house, in which the royal dignity is enchained with the dignity of the regent. But, in my present situation, nothing can interest *me* more than my own peace; the annihilation of the tyranny, which my ministers formerly practised against

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me, and finally your satisfaction. Were I a charlatan, I might also tell you, that I bestow care upon the welfare and wealth of the country; but nothing in the world concerns me less now, and it is your duty alone to take care of this, which can only occupy you, and no one else.

"For henceforth the kingdom is no longer mine; I have, thanks to heaven, ceased to be King of France: I have become instead, as you very properly say, King of the French. I have only to propose to you that you advance in your management, and that, since by the present face of things I no longer occupy myself with any business or preserve any influence, you will have no objection if I often give myself to hunting, (or to walk in the pleasure grounds.)"

The French constitution of that period was really a masterpiece of legislation, but so many short lived constitutions have since been baked, that we may consider the British as the best, not only from its form, but also from its possessing the quality of seniority.

88. *Fruitless Lesson.*

The great lessons given to princes in 1848, so pregnant with important events, seems as yet to have been almost disregarded; and notwithstanding their proclamations addressed to their "*beloved* subjects," it is to fear they think themselves forced to employ severity, instead of pacific means, to appease the people, for which ultra-liberalists unfortunately give the most occasion.

89. *Best form of Government.*

We refer our readers to the Introduction and Conclusion of this little work, to the treatises of Locke, the works of Edmund Burke, "L'Esprit des Lois" of Montesquieu, the works of Baron de Wolf, and many ancient writers on this subject.

90. *Hereditary succession.*

"The hereditary succession to the throne of England is not of such indefeasible nature as not to be altered or modified. The constitution has lodged this power in Parliament—a power which, it is evident, must be vested somewhere—to meet cases of peculiar emergency, (6th Anne, c. 7.) Indeed, it is considered penal to call in question the right of the supreme legislature—crown, lords, and commons—to direct and modify the descent of the crown, by particular entails, limitations, and provisions, to the exclusion of the immediate heir; and this is so extremely reasonable, that, without such a power lodged somewhere, any national polity would be

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very defective: for, to adduce one instance, should the heir apparent be a lunatic or an idiot, how inconvenient would it be to the nation, if there was not the power of some arrangement? On the other hand, the inheritance of the crown, the royal dignity, would be very precarious indeed, if this power were expressly lodged in the hands of the subject, only to be exercised whenever prejudice, caprice, or discontent should rouse the public mind. Consequently, it can nowhere be so properly vested as in the two houses of parliament, with the consent of the reigning sovereign, who, it is to be supposed, will not agree to any improper diversion of the inheritance prejudicial to his own descendants; and, therefore, in the hands of the sovereign, lords, and commons, the constitution has lodged it. And it is far from impossible to reconcile, if we do not suffer ourselves to be entangled in the mazes of metaphysical sophistry, the use both of a fixed rule and an occasional deviation—the sacredness of an hereditary principle of succession in our government, with a power of change in its application in cases of extreme emergency. Even in that extremity, the change is to be confined to the peccant part only—to the part which produced the necessary deviation. A state without the means of some change is without the means of its conservation. An irregular convulsive movement may be necessary to throw off an irregular convulsive disease. But the course of succession is the healthy habit of the British constitution.—*Schomberg's "British Constitution."*

91. *Turbulence of the former Polish Diet.*

Our author here manifestly alludes to Poland, whose diet the world will recollect to have been the most turbulent ever recorded in the annals of history. Its example ought to serve as a warning to the members of recently formed similar institutions, to unite themselves as closely as possible for the purpose of securing the welfare of all states subjected to them, to reap the fruits of the people's efforts, and to preserve the privileges acquired by them, in a moment when the princes yielded, more through fear than conviction, which they already seem to repent, for many reasons, the ultra-liberal faction being one of the most important.

92. *Elements of the British Constitution.*

The elements of the British constitution unite all the advantages which Amund required, and its practical working is as beneficial as its theoretical principle is sound. The executive power of the law is lodged in a single person;

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and, from this circumstance, derives all the advantages of strength and despatch that belong to the most absolute monarchy. In the making of laws, which is the supreme power of the state, legislation possesses, in the House of Lords, all the wisdom and counsel of an aristocracy, whilst in the Commons it possesses all the advantages of a democracy; and it is worthy of observation, that the English form of government has not attained its present form from the theories and the speculations of individuals, but has grown out of those immutable laws by which the moral world is regulated; and is founded, in its essential provisions, by a happy series of providential events, on the present necessities of man. It is removed from the two extremes, which are alike injurious to the interests of society—the despotism of the monarch and the despotism of the multitude. It is a monarchy directed by laws, "controlled and balanced by the hereditary wealth and dignity of the nation; and both, again, controlled by a judicious check from the reason and feeling of the people at large, expressed by a suitable and permanent organ;" so that no mischief can be attempted by any of the three branches, but may be withstood by one of the other two—each being armed with a negative power, which, if honestly exercised, is amply sufficient to resist any innovation which it may consider inexpedient or dangerous.

This constitution, composed apparently of three powers, consists in reality of seven:

The monarchical power.
The legislative power.
The checking power.
The judicial power.
The ecclesiastical power.
The executive power, and
The administrative power.

But several of these may be considered as united together in one body, the legislative and checking powers, the monarchical and executive powers, the judicial and administrative powers, and the ecclesiastical may, as far as mundane matters go, be considered as belonging to the first.

93. *Pretended Origin of Parliament.*

Littleton asserts that already, in the time of the Saxons, the people assembled in the form of a parliament, and at least the magistrates of towns and boroughs had their seats therein. This assertion he founds upon the claims of some boroughs in later years to that right, for the validity of which they quoted the manners of the times, as convincing proofs.

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The same author cites quotations therein, where the assembly of parliament is called "the people." Barnstaxte even pretends this to be mentioned in a charter of Athelstan, And the *antiquaries*, who attended at the assembly at Clarendon, were considered by Littleton as aldermen, or old magistrates of every county; but all this seems not a sufficient proof of the people having had a share in the government as they had under Henry III., and as it was afterwards constituted. It has never been accurately defined, either in law or history, that a member should be called from every county and every borough, nor is there any mention made of any particular person being nominated for that purpose; for among the few free plebians it would have been no easy matter to find out a sufficient number that were, from their estates, or bills of protection, independent of the nobility. Littleton owns himself, that the business of the realm was often settled in parliament by the nobility alone, without the presence of the people; and that the power of the people was by far too little to form an equilibrium between that of the monarch and that of the aristocracy.

94. *Miniature and other Republics.*

Minor republics, as the Hanseatic Towns, and some cantons in Switzerland, have long enjoyed felicity. Among the former, Hamburg may be cited as a real model of a little republic. The legislative and executive powers consist in a senate of twenty-four members, one half of whom are learned, and the other private men, four burgomasters, a certain number of aldermen, churchwardens, a selected body of the citizens, and the whole body that have acquired the right of citizenship, which consists in being a householder, or obtaining the right by paying a considerable fee. Every law, or important decision, is only valid when it has been sanctioned by the senate and the citizens.

The taxes are extremely moderate, so that every possible right of individual liberty, personal security, and happiness and wealth, has been preserved for many hundred years by the inhabitants of that town; and the government generally act with such wisdom, and the inhabitants are so laborious, that wealth has been proportionately speedily restored, even after the oppression of the French invasion, the cruelty of Davoust, and the great fire of 1842.

Venice possessed a very small territory in proportion to her immense power, but abuses were more frequent there than in smaller republics.

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The Netherland republic existed for a long period, but the moderation of the cooler Dutch, together with their true patriotism, (compared to that of other nations,) contributed vastly towards it.

The United States have, with an extensive territory, already peacefully enjoyed the fruits of a well-formed republic, and of a legislation founded by a Washington and a Franklin, for three quarters of a ceutury; but the inhabitants are tradesmen and agriculturists, not troubled with ambition, and the country is too distant and too extensive to be easily overwhelmed by invading European demagogues.

95. *Evils produced by Standing Armies.*

The evil produced by keeping great armies, which give to the generals a preponderance over the magistrates has not been extinguished in modern times, and not even since the time of Napoleon's abdication. Neither the holy alliance, nor the system of non-interference, preserved for a certain length of time, could contribute sufficiently to diminish this canker, which gnaws the welfare of all great European nations, and everywhere increases the national debt. If there is anything that we may envy of the Americans, it is that they have as yet kept that evil off themselves.

96. *Royal Domains.*

It is the duty of a great and faithful minister, while he advises the king to yield to the wishes of the people, at the same time to bestow his greatest care upon strengthening the king's power by preserving, not only his territorial possessions, but likewise his private domains. He must exert himself to the utmost, and sacrifice his property, and even his life, to prevent the situation which ensures those possessions to his master from being changed into one wherein the prince is merely the first man in the nation, and the term, "royal domains," from being considered synonymous with that of "national property;" as the sovereign only remains what he should be—a real monarch—so long as he remains in possession of his royal domains. He can even yield with the more facility to the will of the people, since the possession of these domains ensures him security and permanence; and in such a situation his compliance is noble and worthy. All that the regent thus allots is considered as a free gift, and does not only preserve but even increases the esteem and consideration of the people towards him. He then remains an uncompelled and wealthy donor; and the monarch who can with safety maintain

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such a function will not be deprived of the veneration, gratitude, and obedience of his subjects.

But what is a regent deprived of his domains, who receives his income from the same multitude by whom he is often opposed? And even were the civil list doubled or trebled, the prince still remains impoverished in a country, the trade of which is not its principal resource; a man without property, and in the most abject dependance on those whom he should meet with generosity, and who have shortened his own property. The word "majesty"* loses its force, and the agitated populace feel that the regent can give nothing more to those from whom alone he receives.

The regent who remains in full possession of his domains, even if they be indebted, can alone present himself before his people as a father and a benefactor. He can do this without putting on a mask or performing a false part, at which the spectator would secretly smile. Such a prince can alone grant graces and compliances to the nation, he alone can with real and effective power paralyze, if not altogether avert, by concessions to general wishes, the evil consequences of bad direction, and all this with royal dignity.

But the minister who does not oppose, with all his might, the realization of domains, even if he thinks himself answerable to the nation alone, does not his duty, for he does not only deprive his monarch of his dignity, and his master's race of existence, but he injures the people by impoverishing him who, in times of insurrection, could coolly, and with impartiality witness the storm, and even yield to it without having to fear for himself.

"Formerly the kings of England, as of other European states, were supported from the soil, and not by the system of revenue organised in later times. Commerce and manufactures were then almost unknown; of money there was little, and scarcely any imposts. Gradually the sovereign found out the means of supplying his wants by burdening his lieges with taxes, which rendered the revenues derived from his private domains of less importance. Hence, contemporaneously with the progress of national burdens, may be dated the neglect and alienation of the hereditary possessions. The chief remains of these are the crown lands, consisting of parks, forests, chases, manors, fisheries, and royalties, extensive estates, numerous leaseholds, church livings, fee-farm rents, light-house dues, and mineral trea-

* The word "majesty" was not used in England until the reign of Henry VIII.

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sures. The property is scattered in almost every part of the kingdom, but principally in the metropolis and vicinity; much of it is in Wales, and there are large estates in Ireland."

The above lines are taken from Mr. John Wade's recently published work; and with respect to the employment of the revenues of the royal domains, we refer the reader to the said work, the title of which he will easily discover if he feels any interest in it; with all the good which that book contains, we do not like to recommend it from its very inflammable character. The existence of that work, although very recent, and the little injury which it has committed until the present moment, corresponds with the remarks of Montesquieu, that the climate very much contributes towards the patience of the inhabitants of England; "La servitude commence toujours par le sommeil; mais un peuple qui n'a de repos dans aucune situation, qui se tâte sans cesse, et trouve tous les endroits douloureux, ne pourrait guere s'endormir."

97. *Faults of Elective Power.*

This thesis is proved by the examples of the Emperors of Germany, who were elective; and notwithstanding their repeated elections, and that they originally united the Roman imperial crown to that of Germany, a power they mostly inherited from Charles V., that dignity has almost continually remained in one family, that of the descendants of Habsburg, (not Hapsburg, as we often see it printed in the "*Times*.") Their power has successively declined, for the most insignificant prince permitted himself resistance, until Napoleon put a stop to it by obliging those crowned heads to be satisfied with a title they had themselves decided upon—that of Emperor of Austria. The election appertaining to the old dignity was not the sole cause of its decline, but rather the circumstance of emperors not being possessed of sufficient executive power, nor of the right of using Austrian troops against revolting German princes. For that purpose they possessed a little German army, called "*Reichsarmée*," which was ridiculed by everybody and almost considered like Falstaff's troop of recruits.

98. *Sacredness and Inviolability of the Person of the Sovereign.*

The law enacting that the person of the sovereign is sacred and inviolable is in just accordance with the authenticated revelation of the Supreme Governor of the world, who announces to the tribes of men the important truth:—

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"By Me kings rule, and princes decree judgment." It is but just, then, that the supreme magistrate should be thus dignified: and our constitution has not only followed the voice of nature, which makes the public head the representative of the majesty of the nation, but what, in this case, is still more audible—the voice of God—by awarding to them those attributes, and covering them with their defence, as with a shield of celestial strength. The royal person is sacred, set apart and consecrated to a high and responsible office, for ends of the highest importance, and fraught with results of the most important character. The monarch is to be considered as the vicegerent of heaven. The divine oracle makes the announcement—The sovereign is "the minister of God." Necessarily the immediate servant of the Most High, who shall dare to invade prerogatives which are held under such a charter? It must be either folly or madness, seeing that it is attended with such a sanction as that contained in the following declaration:—"He that resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God."

The above lines, quoted from the Rev. E. D. Schomberg's work, form the basis and immutable principle upon which the personal dignity of the British sovereigns was founded; and it was the policy of our forefathers to use the sanction of religion in building up the safeguard of the state; and the fundamental maxim, that the king can do no wrong, necessarily follows the principle, that the person of the sovereign is sacred and inviolable; for had our forefathers declared the one without the other, the royal person, although sacred and inviolable in appearance, would have been exposed to endless accusation and perpetual dangers; not that the transcendant station of the British monarchs elevates them above the infirmities and errors incident to human nature; but, because the practical wisdom of our ancestors thought it expedient that such a defence should be thrown around them, and have so ordained it that not they, but their ministers, should be responsible for the errors of the administration. If the sovereign, who is a branch of the legislature, were to be subject to the will, and liable to the impeachment of the other branches, it is evident that all the elements of discord would be let loose to disorder the state. It has, therefore, by a bold and almost superhuman effort, surrounded that sacred person with a wall of adamant: it has given the monarch a kind of political perfection; and, as the civil head represents the collective body of the nation, it has determined that, politically speaking, the crown cannot err; and though at first sight, this may appear a dangerous posi-

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tion, yet we shall afterwards see, when we come to treat of the limitations of the monarchy, how completely it is neutralized, as to any tendency to evil. At present, without having recourse to the doctrine of "the divine right of kings," we must repeat that it is the essence of wisdom, and the groundwork of our political existence. But the doctrine of "divine right," when soberly interpreted, can scarcely admit of controversy, viz., that the monarchical power, to which such important trusts have been committed, is under the peculiar sanction of that Divine Providence which extends its care to every individual of the human race, however ignoble or mean.

This right of inviolability of the person of the monarch has been preserved from the most remote to the latest times; and even the French nation has acknowledged, in chap.ii.p.11, of the constitution which Louis XVI. was compelled to give them, that "the person of the king is sacred and inviolable:" which however did not prevent them from executing the same unfortunate king a year after.

In the most recent times nations seem, however, to have shown disregard for that fundamental law of monarchical power, but there is no doubt they will soon return to it, as common sense must acknowledge, that no monarchical power can subsist *without* that maxim.

99. *Royal Power limited by Laws.*

Locke expresses himself on this subject as follows:— "Though the legislative, whether placed in one or more, whether it be always in being or only by intervals, though it be the supreme power in every commonwealth; yet it is not, nor can possibly be, absolutely arbitrary over the lives and fortunes of the people. For it being but the joint of every member of the society given up to that person, or assembly, which is legislator, it can be no more than those persons had in a state of nature before they entered into society, and gave it up to the community. For nobody can transfer to another more power than he has in himself; and nobody has an absolute arbitrary power over himself, or over any other, destroy his own life, or take away the life or property of another. A man, as has been proved, cannot subject himself to the arbitrary power of another; and having in the state of nature no arbitrary power over the life, liberty, or possession of another, but only so much as the law of nature gives him for the preservation of himself, and the rest of mankind; this is all he doth, or can give up

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of the commonwealth, and by it to the legislative power, so that the legislative can have no more than this; their power, in the utmost bound of it, is limited to the public good of the society. It is a power that hath no other end but preservation, and therefore can never have a right to destroy, enslave, or designedly to impoverish the subject; the obligations of the law of nature cease not in society, but only in many cases are drawn closer, and have by humane laws known penalties amerced to them to enforce their observation. Thus the law of nature stands as an eternal rule to all men, legislators as well as others. The rules that they make for other nations must be conformable to the law of nature, *i. e.* to the will of God, of which that is a declaration, and the fundamental law of nature being the preservation of mankind, no human sanction can be good or valid against it.

"The legislative, or supreme authority, cannot assume to itself a power to rule by extemporary arbitrary decrees, but is bound to dispense justice, and decide the rights of the subject by promulgated standing laws, and known authorized judges. For the law of nature being unwritten, and so nowhere to be found but in the minds of men, they who, through passion or interest, shall miscite or misapply it, cannot so easily be convinced of their mistake where there is no established judge: and so it serves not as it ought to determine the rights, and fence the properties of those that live under it, especially where every one is judge, interpreter, and executioner of it too, and that in his own case: and that he has right on his side, having ordinarily but his own single strength, hath not force enough to defend himself from injuries, or to punish delinquents. To avoid these inconveniences which disorder men's properties in the state of nature, men unite into societies, that they may have the united strength of the whole society to secure and defend their properties, and may have standing rules to bound it, by which every one may know what is his. To this end it is that men give up all their natural power to the society they enter into, and the community put the legislative power into such hands as they think fit, with this trust, that they shall be governed by declared laws, or else their peace, quiet, and property, will still be at the same uncertainty as it was in the state of nature.

"Absolute arbitrary power, or government without settled standing laws, can neither of them consist with the ends of society and government, which men would not quit the freedom of the state of nature for, and tie themselves up under were it not to preserve their lives, liberties, and fortunes,

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and by stated rules of right and property to secure their peace and quiet. It cannot be supposed that they should intend, had they a power so to do to any one or more, an absolute arbitrary power over their persons and estates, and put a force into the magistrate's hand to execute his unlimited will arbitrarily upon them. This were to put themselves into a worse condition than the state of nature, wherein they had a liberty to defend their right against the injuries of others, and were upon equal terms of force to maintain it, whether invaded by a single man, or many in combination.

"The supreme power cannot take from any man any part of his property without his own consent. For the preservation of property being the end of government, and that for which men enter into society, it necessarily supposes and requires that the people should have property, without which they must be supposed to lose that by entering into society, which was the end for which they entered into it, too gross an absurdity for any man to own. Men therefore in society, having property, they have such a right to the goods, which by the law of the community are theirs, that nobody hath a right to take them, or any part of them from them, without their own consent; without this they have no property at all. For I have truly no property in that which another can by right take from me when he pleases, against my consent. Hence it is a mistake to think that the supreme or legislative power of any commonwealth can do what it will, and dispose of the estate of the subject arbitrarily, or take any part of them at pleasure."

100. *Liberty of the Press.*

The truth of this observation cannot be contested. Even the liberty of the press needs to be moderated by some sound limits; for that which at first is the *liberty* of the press, too often degenerates into the *licentiousness* of the press. This is the reason why all legislators, who surrendered the gift of that inflammable phlogiston into the hands of the people, have soon been obliged to retract it: in the hands of the English only has it been supported for a length of time; but, "*si cette nation avait encore recu du climat un certain caractère d'impatience qui ne lui permit pas de souffrir longtemps les mêmes choses,*"* the abuses of the press would be considerably greater than they actually are.

Although the British legislators have thought themselves

* Montesquieu.

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obliged to limit (by a recent law) printed and verbal free expressions, we believe that to appease turbulence they had at their disposal other and better means than the violation of one of their fundamental laws; as at present, of all nations, the English and the daughter country are, from their moderation, the only ones worthy of possessing, unlimited, that golden fruit of liberty. With respect to *verbal* expressions, see Note 165.

101. *Justice sacrificed to momentary Welfare.*

The means of winning the laws through the judges exist in all countries, not excepting the freest; and when these judges are of too high a rank, or too well paid to be influenced by bribery, it is done by misleading their views, and by it being represented to them that the security of society partly depends on their judgment; whereby *justice* is often sacrificed to *general welfare;* examples of what we now advance occurred not a century back.

102. *Means of Influence.*

The creation of peers, and the nomination of court functionaries, belong to this category, as well as the increasing number of civil servants of government. "In 1847," says a recently published work, "the number of persons employed by the English government in the capacity of civil servants was estimated at twenty-five thousand, with salaries short of three millions. In France, in the same year, the number of *employés* of the government was nearly six hundred thousand; and as the number of registered electors amounted only to two hundred thousand, it left three places for each voter to aspire to. Here was a resource for influencing the elections, and securing a majority in the Chamber of Deputies! each member in consequence became the centre of a constellation of government dependants, who had bartered the electoral franchise for place and profit."

On honour, used as a lever in government, Montesquieu speaks as follows:—"*Comme il faut de la vertu dans une république, et dans une monarchie de l'honneur, il faut de la crainte dans un gouvernement despotique: pour la vertu elle n'y est point nécessaire, et l'honneur y serait dangereux.*"

103. *Liberty of Opinion.*

Haller here permits the most absolute monarch, Alfred, to defend the rights of the liberty of the press, or rather, (as no newspaper existed in his time,) those of speaking the

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truth, and freely expressing one's opinions; while in the following paragraph, (p. 104,) the free-thinking Amund recommends some boundaries to that unlimitted liberty. We refer our readers on this subject to Note 100.

104. *Limits of the patience of a Nation.*

It is quite superfluous to cite examples here, the reader will find sufficient ones by looking back into the events of 1848.

105. *Fines for accidental words.*

We rather suspect that when Haller made use of that number he was thinking of the gold mines of Mexico, as those of California were not then discovered.

106. *Legitimacy of Insurrection.*

This medium is exceedingly difficult to find; for every insurrection, even those against the most despotic prince, is, after all, a criminal action, an attack of individuals against society in general, and the existing laws; but as the revolutionaries, who act from true patriotism, are well aware of their actions, and know that they begin with high treason, and that the result alone can sanction their efforts, they in general believe that the purpose excuses the means; and as our head must condemn, and our heart defend them, we are glad to find in the following words of Locke a wiser defender than we can, or wish to, pretend to be:—"*What then, can there no case happen wherein the people may of right, and by their own authority, help themselves, take arms, and set upon their king, imperiously domineering over them? None at all, whilst he remains a king.* Honour the king, *and* he that resists the power, resists the ordinance of God; *are divine oracles that will never permit it. The people therefore can never come by a power over him, unless he does something that makes him cease to be a king. For then he divests himself of his crown and dignity, and returns to the state of a private man, and the people become free and superior; the power which they had in the* interregnum, *before they crowned him king, devolving to him again. But there are but few miscarriages which bring the matter to this state. After considering it well on all sides, I can find but two. Two cases there are, I say, whereby a king,* ipso facto, *becomes no king, and loses all power and regal authority over his people, which are also taken notice of by* Winzerus.

"The first is, if he endeavour to overturn the government,

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that is, if he have a purpose and design to ruin the kingdom and commonwealth, as it is recorded of Nero, that he resolved to cut off the senate and people of Rome, lay the city waste with fire and sword, and then remove to some other place. And of Caligula, that he openly declared that he would be no longer a head to the people or senate, and that he had it in his thoughts to cut off the worthiest men of both ranks, and then retire to Alexandria; and he wished that the people had but one neck, that he might despatch them all at a blow. Such designs as these, when any king harbours in his thoughts and seriously promotes, he immediately gives up all care and thought of the commonwealth, and consequently forfeits the power of governing his subjects, as a master does the dominion over his slaves whom he hath abandoned.

"The other case is, when a king makes himself the dependant of another, and subjects his kingdom which his ancestors left him, and the people put free into his hands, to the dominion of another. For however, perhaps, it may not be in his intention to prejudice the people, yet because he has hereby lost the principal part of regal dignity, viz. to be next and immediately under God, supreme in his kingdom, and also because he betrayed or forced his people, whose liberty he ought to have carefully preserved, into the power and dominion of a foreign nation. By this, as it were, alienation of his kingdom, he himself loses the power he had in it before, without transferring the least right to those on whom he would have bestowed it, and so by this act sets the people free, and leaves them at their own disposal. One example of this is to be found in the Scotch Annals.

"In these cases Barclay, the great champion of absolute monarchy, is forced to allow, that a king may be resisted, and cease to be a king. That is, in short, not to multiply cases, in whatsoever he has no authority, there he is no king, and may be resisted: for wheresoever the authority ceases, the king ceases too, and becomes like other men who have no authority. And these two cases he instances differ but little from those above mentioned, to be destructive to governments, only that he has omitted the principle from which his doctrine flows, and that is, the breach of trust, in not preserving the form of government agreed on, and in not intending the end of government itself, which is the public good and preservation of property. When a king has dethroned himself, and put himself in a state of war with his people, what shall hinder them from prosecuting him who

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is no king, as they would any other man, who has put himself into a state of war with them; Barclay, and those of his opinion, would do well to tell us. This farther I desire may be taken notice of out of Barclay, that he says, 'The mischief that is designed them, the people may prevent before it be done,' whereby he allows resistance when tyranny is but in design. Such designs as these, (says he) when any king harbours in his thoughts and seriously promotes, he immediately gives up all care and thought of the commonwealth; so that, according to him, the neglect of the public good is to be taken as an evidence of such a design, or at least for a sufficient cause of resistance. And the reason of all he gives in these words, because he betrayed or forced his people, whose liberty he ought carefully to have preserved. What he adds into the power and dominion of a foreign nation signifies nothing, the fault and forfeiture lying in the loss of their liberty which he ought to have preserved, and not in any distinction of the persons to whose dominion they were subjected. The people's right is equally invaded, and their liberty lost, whether they are made slaves to any of their own, or a foreign nation; and in this lies the injury, and against this only have they the right of defence. And there are instances to be found in all countries, which show that it is not the change of nations in the persons of their governors, but the change of government that gives the offence. Bilson, a bishop of our church, and a great stickler for the power and prerogative of princes, does, if I mistake not, in his treatise of Christian subjection, acknowledge that princes may forfeit their power and their title to the obedience of their subjects; and if there needed authority in a case where reason is so plain, I could refer my readers to Bracton, Fortescue, and the author of the *Mirror*, and others; writers, who cannot be suspected to be ignorant of our government, or enemies to it. But I thought Hooker alone might be enough to satisfy those men, who relying on him for their ecclesiastical polity, are by strange fate carried to deny those principles upon which he builds it. Whether they are herein made the tools of cunning workmen, to pull down their own fabric, they had best look. This I am sure, their civil policy is so new, so dangerous, and so destructive to both rulers and people, that as former ages never could bear the broaching of it, so it may be hoped those to come, redeemed from the imposition of those Egyptian under-taskmasters, will abhor the memory of such servile flatterers, who, whilst it seemed to serve their turn,

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resolved all government into absolute tyranny, and would have all men born to what their mean souls fitted them, slavery.

"Here, 'tis like the common question will be made, who should be judge, whether the prince or legislative act contrary to their trust? This, perhaps, ill affected and factious men may spread amongst the people, when the prince only makes use of his due prerogative. To this I reply, the people shall be judge; for who shall be judge whether his trustee or deputy acts well, and according to the trust reposed in him; but he who deputes him, and must, by having deputed him, have still a power to discard him, when he fails in his trust. If this be reasonable in particular cases of private men, why should it be otherwise in that of the greatest moment, where the welfare of millions is concerned, and also where the evil, if not prevented, is greater, and the redress very difficult, dear, and dangerous.

"But farther, this question (who shall be judge?) cannot mean, that there is no judge at all. For where there is no judicature on earth, to decide controversies amongst men, God in heaven is judge: He alone, 'tis true, is judge of the right. But every man is judge for himself, as in all other cases, so in this, whether another hath put himself in a state of war with him, and whether he should appeal to the Supreme Judge, as Jeptha did.

"If a controversy arise betwixt a prince and some of the people, in a matter where the law is silent or doubtful, and the thing be of great consequence, I should think the proper umpire, in such a case, should be the body of the people. For in cases where the prince hath a trust reposed in him, and is dispensed from the common ordinary rules of the law; there, if any men find themselves aggrieved, and think the prince acts contrary to, or beyond that trust, who so proper to judge as the body of the people, (who at first lodged that trust in him,) how far they meant it should extend? But if the prince, or whoever they be in the administration, decline that way of determination, the appeal then lies nowhere but to heaven. Force between either persons, who have no known superior on earth, or which permits no appeal to a judge on earth, being properly a state of war, wherein the appeal lies only to heaven, and in that state the injured party must judge for himself, when he will think fit to make use of that appeal, and puts himself upon it.

"To conclude, the power that every individual gave the

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society, when he entered into it, can never revert to the individuals again, as long as the society lasts, but will always remain in the community; because, without this, there can be no community, no commonwealth, which is contrary to the original agreement. So also when the society hath placed the legislative in any assembly of men, to continue in them and their successors, with direction and authority for providing such successors; the legislative can never revert to the people whilst that government lasts; because, having provided a legislative with power to continue for ever, they have given up their political power to the legislative, and cannot resume it. But if they have set limits to the duration of their legislative, and made this supreme power in any person or assembly only temporary; or else, when, by the miscarriages of those in authority, it is forfeited, upon the forfeiture of their rulers, or at the determination of the time set, it reverts to the society, and the people have a right to act as supreme, and continue the legislative in themselves, or place it in a new form, or new hands, as they think good."

107. *Non-appreciation of Public Opinion.*

The legal resistance of the powers joined to the sovereign is, in our times, mostly paralyzed by the majority on the side of the ministers; and, in parliamentary debates, terminates, ninety-nine times out of a hundred, in pompous words, without any result. The observations proposed by the opposition, in the form of amendments, are, if they contain the slightest tinge of blame, suppressed by the majority; and the debates themselves, in which that blame is reported, are probably not read, or even, perhaps, despised by the monarch, as coming from the opposition.

The tokens of general aversion are, in most cases, not visible to the prince and his *entourage*, who generally stand between the people and himself—unless he ranges through the streets unknown, and in disguise, as Peter of Aragon, Joseph II., many caliphs of Bagdad, and other princes from the middle ages till the last century, (this method of discovering the truth has long been out of fashion,)—for the *vivats* exclaimed by the people on the public appearance of the monarch cannot give a just idea of the affection which the populace bear to their sovereign; as these exclamations are mostly commanded, or shouted to practise their voices, and would be abandoned by many did it cost them as much as the value of a pint of beer, or a *canon* of wine.

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The resentment shown to bad officers is also void of success, as *ils ne s'en soucient pas*, and endeavour to remain with their "*nichts durchbohrendem Gefühle*" as long as they can in their functions and dignities. Their responsibility to the nation is generally illusive, and their answers to the political questions addressed to them are mostly superficial; having secured the majority on their side, they do not even take the trouble of giving reasonable excuses for the abuses and errors they commit.

108. *Limits of Transgression.*

In Note 106, in which we have quoted an extract from "Locke's Maxims," the limits of transgression on the part of the king, which authorize the people to revolt, will be found; but we are glad to observe that our progress in civilization has advanced so far, that in all the recent events and revolutions, the people were not forced to *seek their security in the blood of the tyrants.*

109. *Tyrants govern by Fear.*

The action of Charles XII., of writing to his senate that he would send one of his boots to represent him, was fearfully avenged on himself.* And Montesquieu says that "Lorsque dans le gouvernement despotique le prince cesse un moment de lever le bras, quand il ne peut pas anéantir à l'instant ceux qui ont les premières places, tout est perdu." And the worst is, that a despot cannot stop in his course of tyranny, even if he would.—"Le sophi de Perse, détroné par Mirivéis vit le gouvernement périr avant la conquête, parce qu'il n'avait pas versé assez de sang;"—but as in the hands of Providence all means, even evil, lead to good,—"L'histoire nous dit que les horribles cruautés de Domitien effrayèrent les gouverneurs au point que le peuple se retablit un peu sous son regne. C'est ainsi qu'un torrent qui ravage tout d'un coté laisse de l'autre des campagnes ou l'œil voit

* This fact is founded on the authority of historians, who pretend that Charles XII. was killed by his own subjects through the medium of Siquier, his *aide-de-camp*, a man of spirit and execution, engaged in his service in Turkey, who was particularly attached to the Prince of Hesse; but it is not unknown to us that Voltaire contradicts this opinion in Siquier's own words: —"*J'aurai pu tuer le roi de Suede; mais tel était mon respect pour ce héros, que si je l'avais voulu, je n'aurais pas osé.*" The same author attributes to Charles XII. so many virtues, that we should do wrong to call him a despot, did not Voltaire acknowledge that his justice was sometimes extended to cruelty, and that in his last years, the maintenance of his authority approached to tyranny.

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de loin quelques prairies." Even in the most recent epochs we have experienced that fear, combined with reason, have fulfilled the difficult task of preventing anarchies, which the latter alone would not have been capable of doing.

110. *Functions of the Nobility in the State.*

We have in a former note spoken of the nobility and their advantage to the state. The British nobility, which form, in conjunction with the bishops of the Church of England, sixteen peers elective for Scotland, and twenty-eight for Ireland, the members of the House of Lords, may be considered as the natural guardians of the constitution,—the hereditary legislators of the land. The perpetuation of property in succession is the most valuable arrangement and most interesting consideration connected with its possession, and contributes most to the perpetuation of society itself. The possessors of family wealth, and of the distinctions which attend hereditary possessions, as most concerned in it, are the natural securities for this transmission. The House of Peers is formed upon this principle:—it is wholly composed of hereditary property and hereditary distinction, and made therefore the third of the legislature; and, in the last event, the sole judge of all property in all its subdivisions. They are eminently the great council of the sovereign; and are, as a body, the most exalted and independent in the state. In this house, indeed, is combined all that is illustrious in rank, splendid in talent, elevated in soul, and ample in fortune. No state of things could at once create such an assembly as the British House of Lords. It has been created by a long train of circumstances, over which, as it were, our ancestors had no control—it has grown, as all great institutions must, out of the necessity of things—it represents at once the wealth, the knowledge, the honour, and the ancient blood of the country—it may be destroyed, but not created. Fresh blood is constantly infused into the House of Lords from the ranks of the army, the navy, and the law; and under our happy constitution, the humblest man in the realm may aspire to the highest rank amongst the nobility as the reward of his talents and industry. Although confessedly the aristocratic part of the legislature, and inheriting all the feelings of their high birth, yet they have never wanted men of the noblest genius, and of the most enlightened and liberal views, who preferred the glory of their country to the elevation of their own order. There was a time, indeed, when the

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very lustre that surrounded their rank dazzled and overpowered the multitude: but, in these days of free and unrestrained inquiry, the once sacred barrier of rank has been completely invaded and broken through; and, as is always the case, the triumph in one instance has rendered the whole phalanx less inviolable; and we every day find their public conduct as freely canvassed and animadverted upon as that of any other individual class in the state; nor are we left to doubt but that very great advantages are likely to arise from such a scrutiny. It was not desirable that the very name, devoid of other circumstances, should produce its effects on the community. This influential body have been taught that title alone, like all other earthly distinctions, is vain, unless allied to more transcendant qualities. The attainments of the understanding, and the virtues of the heart, are, assuredly, the only true power. Without these, whatever may be the external splendour of the House of Lords, it must degenerate in its character, and its efforts for good become powerless; it would sink from its proud elevation and defeat the design for which it was made a constituent part of the legislature. But it must not be so. Any polished ruffian, dressed in robes, may personate a prince or a nobleman; but true dignity of mind, integrity of purpose, and purity of manners, united with the endowments of the mind, can alone furnish an hereditary legislator of England. What, then, if the coronet shines more feebly amidst the blaze of science, the splendour of learning and the diffusion of knowledge, yet there is a vast majority of the thinking and respectable portion of the community who are fully prepared to give honour where honour is due, and in whose eyes the British peer, adorned with the graces of Christian virtue, is worthy of the highest respect and admiration. Nor can one behold, without exultation, the high moral tone and mental vigour which of late years have distinguished this privileged class of society, inasmuch as from this circumstance, we cannot but augur well for the institutions of our country, which, in a great measure, must stand or fall with them: and we may hope that the whole body shall be led to see that their power was not conferred upon them by the Supreme Governor of the world, to foster their own self-indulgence, and to increase their means of gratification, but for the good of the community at large; and that, by befriending the poor, protecting the innocent, succouring the indigent, and, in parliament, defending the rights, and securing the prosperity and happiness of the

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people, they will show themselves worthy of the high trust reposed in them by the constitution.

"You do not imagine," says the immortal Burke, "that I wish to confine power, authority, and distinction to blood, and names, and titles. No: there is no qualification for government but virtue and wisdom, actual or presumptive. Wherever they are actually found, they have, in whatever state, condition, profession, or trade, the passport of heaven to human place and power. Woe to the country that would madly and impiously reject the service of the talents and virtues, civil, military, or religious, that are given to grace and to serve it; and would condemn to obscurity everything formed to diffuse lustre and glory around a state. Woe to that country, too, that, passing into the opposite extreme, considers a low education, a mean contracted view of things, a sordid, mercenary occupation, as a preferable title to command. Everything ought to be open, but not indifferently, to every man: no rotation, no appointment by lot, no mode of election operating in the spirit of sortition or rotation, can be generally good in a government conversant in extensive objects, because they have no tendency, direct or indirect, to fit the man for duty. I do not hesitate to say that the road to eminence and power, from obscure condition, ought not to be made too easy, nor a thing too much of course. If rare merit be the rarest of all rare things, it ought to pass through some sort of probation; the temple of honour ought to be seated on an eminence. If it be open through virtue, be it remembered, too, that virtue is never tried but by some difficulty and some struggle.....Let those large proprietors, such as compose the House of Lords, be what they will (and they have their chance of being amongst the best,) they are, at the very worst, the ballast in the vessel of the commonwealth. For though hereditary wealth, and the rank which goes with it, are too much idolized by creeping sycophants, and the blind abject admirers of power, they are too rashly slighted in the shallow speculations of the petulant, assuming, short-sighted coxcombs of philosophy. Some decent regulated pre-eminence, some preference (not exclusive appropriation) given to birth, is neither unnatural, nor unjust, nor impolitic."

Haller gives to the nobility the honourable function of "defending the state," "assisting the king," and averting "from the commoner [the people] all kinds of oppression." We heartily wish that on this last point they may bestow their utmost care and most ardent exertions.

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"*Abollissez dans une monarchie les prérogatives des seigneurs, du clergé, de la noblesse, et des villes, vous aurez bientot un état populaire, ou bien un état despotique.*"—MONTESQUIEU.

111. *Right of every Man to a share of Happiness.*

The propagation of the ancient principle, "that every citizen has a right to the claim of the utmost amount of happiness being guaranteed him by the constitution, although very seldom acted upon by governments, has, in the latest epochs, provoked many evils. We will rather give up a portion of the little share of happiness allotted by Providence to every man, than preserve it, or acquire it through the false doctrines of socialism and their application.

Where the land is the property of the nobility, and the countryman is merely his farmer, as is the case in England, the latter reaps, perhaps, as much prosperity from the land he cultivates, as the former (we only wish this were the case also in Ireland,)—prosperity to which the free trade system will never present a real obstacle.

112. *Landlords and Tenants.*

At the present time, the commoners would not assist the nobility against the king, as they did centuries back; and by referring the reader to the former note, we may say, that the commoners are, principally in England, more attached to the royal dynasty than to their own landlords.

113. *Justice invested in the Nobility.*

"The nobility have likewise the administration of justice;" and even now, the House of Lords is considered the highest course of judicature in the land; and in it all appeals from other courts find their termination. To be a good judge, the title of baron seems to be indispensable, making almost the same impression upon the audience as the large curled wig.

Montesquieu says, "qu'il ne suffit pas qu'il y ait dans une monarchie des rangs intermédiaires; il faut encore un dépôt de lois. Ce depôt ne peut être que dans les corps politiques, qui annoncent les lois lorsqu'elles sont faites, et les rappellent lorsqu'on les oublie. L'ignorance naturelle à la noblesse, son inattention, son mépris pour le gouvernement civil, exigent qu'il y ait un corps qui fasse sans cesse *sortir les lois de la poussiere ou elles seraient ensevelies.* Le conseil du prince n'est pas un dépôt convenable. Il est, par sa nature, le depôt de la volonté momentanée du prince qui

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éxécute, et non pas le dèpôt des lois fondamentales. De plus, le conseil du monarque change sans cesse; il n'est point permanent: il ne saurait être nombreux; il n'a point à un assez haut dégér la confiance du peuple: il n'est donc pas en état de l'éclairer dans les temps difficiles, ni de le ramener a l'obeissance."

The British legislation is in such a condition that it ought to have "un corps (d'armée) qui fasse sans cesse *sortir les lois de la poussière ou elles sont ensevelies.*" Two hundred and thirty-four Acts of Parliament are now inaccurately called obsolete, but no Act is obsolete until repealed, and any of these two hundred and thirty-four statutes may be put in force by any one choosing to take advantage of them. Seven hundred and eighty statutes have expired, and three hundred and seventy-six have been repealed, and supposed to have been repealed by implication, but of these it is doubtful whether one hundred and forty-two have been so repealed, or are still in force. No lawyer, therefore, nor any judge could tell at this moment whether these hundred and forty-two statutes are or are not the law of the realm.

114. *Knowledge of Judges and their privation of Property.*

When Haller wrote *naïvement* "that the judges must be brought up in the knowledge of the laws, and *in the research of principles for every case*," he did not probably think of the equivocation of his words, which may be taken as irony upon English practice of justice, based on examples existing in a chaos of isolated acts and judgments, and not on a regular code of laws as we mentioned in a former note.

"The judge must not be settled in the county, wherein he must likewise not possess any property;" we must accordingly presume, that if he judges in Middlesex, he has his country seat in Surrey, and only possesses a leasehold property, having too much respect for the above maxim as to possess a freehold estate, which would also come too expensive, his income having only been more than doubled from 1792 till 1848.

115. *Prerogative of the King.*

If we are not mistaken, the East India Company share that prerogative with the king on some occasions. It would, however lead us too far from our subject to investigate the *pro* and *con* of that maxim.

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116. *Opening and Dissolving of Parliament by the King.*
The day of the opening of that great convention is fixed by the king, then postponed once, twice, and often three times, till it really takes place with great solemnity and splendour. The crowned head reads aloud a skilfully composed harangue, the best quality of which is that it is not composed by himself; but he presides, in fact, full ten minutes over the powers of the realm, unless he prefers fulfilling that solemnity by proxy.

On proroguing the Parliament, the formality is repeated, bating the reading of a speech; but on dissolving it much less trouble is taken, as this is generally merely done by a decree.

117. *Degrees of Nobility in England.*
In Note 110 we have already spoken of the necessity of granting to the nobility the privileges of prolonging, by hereditary right, the prerogatives obtained by their merit. The British nobility possess five degrees, distinguished by the titles of duke, marquis, earl, viscount, and baron. The dignity of the duke is created by patent, cincture of the sword, mantle of state, imposition of a cap and coronet of gold, and a verge of gold placed in his hand. The sword is to remind him that he is bound to defend the crown and his kingdom in time of war; the crown of gold is a counsellor to the state and kingdom in time of peace; and the verge of gold is given to him as an emblem of his authority as a legislator. He is styled "his grace," and his eldest son, "lord marquis;" the younger sons only, "lord," and his daughters, "lady."

The marquises and earls are created like the dukes, with slight differences in their ornaments and garments. All their sons are "lords" by the courtesy of England; and all their daughters, "ladies." The eldest son of an earl bears the title of "viscount," but the younger sons are but "esquires."

Viscounts and barons are made by patents, and the latter sometimes by writ, when called to the House of Lords. Their garments and crests differ somewhat from the former, and their children are without titles.

The number of the lords temporal is indefinite, and may be increased at the pleasure of the crown. The sixteen peers chosen for Scotland hold their seats only during the term of each Parliament; and the twenty-eight peers of Ireland are elected for life.

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The lords spiritual are the two archbishops and twenty-four bishops of England, and four of Ireland. The right by which the English bishops enjoy seats in the upper house arises from holding, or being supposed to hold, certain baronies under the crown.

Two peers are sufficient to constitute a House of Lords; but as forty are needed to form a House of Commons, we perceive that here *quality* replaces *quantity*. This may also account for their sessions being so very short in comparison to those of the commons, in which we are so often obliged to seek "*der langen Rede kurzen Sin.*"

Our impartiality compels us to quote the following words from Schomberg's "British Constitution:"—"It is but justice to this noble house to say, that for a long series of years, it has exhibited a degree of liberality, justice, and patriotism, which has never been equalled by any assembly that ever existed. It has never refused to give up the privileges of its members, wherever it has been shown that they stood in the way of public justice. They have, by their own free consent, so far reduced these privileges, that they have now the enjoyment of no more than is necessary for the due maintenance of the constitutional design of their house."

118. *Ecclesiastical Power in the British Constitution.*

As the bishops alone possessed in Alfred's time some of the sciences, other and more weighty reasons have influenced them to preserve the ecclesiastical power in the British constitution; for, it will scarcely be denied that this great institution, the church of England, is a part of it, and as a national establishment it is a bulwark of no common power. "It is worse than trifling to say that it is a creature of the state, or a mere engine for carrying on the purposes of government. It is as much a part of the constitution as the House of Lords or Commons, or even the monarchy itself. It has been said that the state *could* go on without it: so it undoubtedly would—so it would, without the House of Lords, or even the monarchy. It would go on, because the course of society must proceed. But the question is—how would it go on? The constitution of England would have lost an integral part of its subsistence. If it be inquired, what part in the constitution it sustains?—let it be answered, the most beneficial, the most benevolent, the most powerful. The legislative power acts for the general welware, by the enactment of beneficial laws; the judicial power, by the just application of them; the executive, by

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duly and impartially enforcing them; but the ecclesiastical power, by informing the understanding, enlightening the conscience, infusing the moral vigour of Christianity amongst the mass of the citizens, and training them as candidates for immortality. It is impossible to calculate the influence of such an institution upon all ranks of society: it acts as a consolidating principle: it binds together the different parts of the body politic: it is, indeed, the citadel of the constitution. If God be the originator, founder, and preserver of society, it is the altar that sanctifies the temple of the social system: it strengthens the throne, nerves the arm of the magistrate, supports the laws, and blesses the people. It has been said that the church is allied to the state—an expression too often used without reflection. It is allied to the state in the same way that the monarchy is allied to the state, or the House of Commons: it is one of the elements of the constitution: it has been argued, that her churches and emoluments belong of right to the Romanists, by whom they were built and endowed. With as much truth might it be said, that the throne belongs to them, St. Stephen's Chapel, and the House of Lords. All have passed through their hands, and for each we have had equally to contend. It has also been asked why the present church, to the exclusion of all others, has been chosen to fill up this part of our constitution? It is answered—the present church has not been chosen: it is the oldest institution of the country: it existed before the monarchy, or the lords, or commons, or the Popish church: it is nearly coeval with Christianity itself. The church of England we may consider as the true apostolical episcopacy, which has devolved to us through successive generations, delivered, at the Reformation, from the abuses imposed upon it during a long season of darkness, and, in a great measure, restored to its pristine excellence and beauty. The present ecclesiastical establishment is, therefore, in its own proper place in the constitution. It is not there by preference: it has usurped no other church: it is not there by permission nor by compulsion: it is its own witness—its own legitimatizer: it has fulfilled and is now fulfilling the duties of its function in the constitution, if not with all the efficiency which might be expected from its resources, yet with admirable consistency and advantage to the community. Its Liturgy is above all human praise; and, its enemies being judges, is nearly a perfect composition. But, whilst we hold that the church of England is the national church by ancient prescription

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and right, yet, as adopted and authorized by the state as the legal organ for the administration of religion, it may be necessary, in a work of this kind, to lay down the argument on which such authority is exercised by the state. The end of government is to secure the existence of the body politic —to protect it, and to furnish the individuals who comprise it, with the power of enjoying, in safety and tranquillity, their social rights and the blessings of conventional existence. This end government effects, first, *directly*—by providing for the appointment and compensation of public officers in all departments, and for the making and administering of such laws as bear immediately upon personal security, liberty, and property; and, secondly, *indirectly*—by conducting such operations and appointing such institutions as shall have a tendency to make men better citizens: facilitate the enjoyment of their rights and property, extend the means of intellectual acquirements, and secure their social intercourse and happiness."

The above is quoted from Dr. Schomberg's "British Constitution;" but it would lead us too far to enter further into the arguments of the reverend author for maintaining that superior power.

Whether that superior power should be maintained at so extraordinary an expense by the British nation, we will not take upon ourselves to decide, but content ourselves with some lines from a work by Benjamin Flower, on the French constitution, in which the necessity of a reformation in the church and state is explained:—

"The principle articles which we find in the constitution, respecting the church, are those which relate to the property, by which it has been hitherto supported, and to that property by which it is to be supported in future.

"Property, destined to the expense of worship, and to all services of public utility, belongs to the nation, and shall at all times be at its disposal. The salaries of the ministers of the Catholic religion, who are paid, preserved, elected, or named in virtue of the decrees of the National Constituent Assembly, form a part of the national debt.

"To those whose minds are not tainted with prejudice, little need be said to prove the justice of the National Assembly on this occasion. If the legislative power of any country forms a church establishment, if the ministers of that establishment are paid like other servants of the public, it follows of course, that the same legislative power has the absolute right to all the public property by which the church

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is at any time maintained. As this has been disputed, and as the assembly have been much reviled for thus declaring all church property the property of the nation, it may not be amiss if we inquire a little into the nature of ecclesiastical possessions; which inquiry may, perhaps, enable us properly to understand the subject.

"With regard to the property of the church of France, or any other established church, it may be divided into two classes: the first comprises that part which is immediately paid by the public; such as tithes, lands, or estates of any kind, appropriated by the supreme power for the maintenance of the said establishment. As to all this species of property, surely no one can dispute that the same power which gave, has a right to resume it. The clergy in all countries, have done, it is to be hoped, with the nonsense of *Jus Divinum*, and that they are too wise to talk of inherent right, or to claim any public property, without the express and declared permission of the government they are under. All property granted by the supreme power, for the support of any public body of men, may be regulated, or resumed, just as circumstances render eligible, and no one can with justice complain. All religious establishments are supposed to be formed and continued for the benefit of the people; and that power which has a right to form them, has the right in all respects to regulate them, so that they may best answer the grand end proposed.

"The other species of property by which the church has been supported is: gifts or grants from individuals, either in their lifetime, or by bequest after their death. I shall not here inquire (although it may be worth the inquiry) how this property has been in different ages and countries acquired. Everybody knows what an admirable contrivance the religion of Rome has been for picking of pockets, and for gulling people out of their estates, to the great loss of their families and relatives. Had it not been for our Statute of Mortmain, it was thought the clergy would have shortly been in possession of the greater part of the landed property in the kingdom. Whatever methods were made use of to compel men to part with their substance, I will venture to maintain that this species of property from the moment it was acquired by the church, was public property to all intents and purposes, and that it mingled with the general mass appropriated to one and the same end."

Montesquieu acknowledges the benefit of the power of religion in the constitution of the state, and principally in

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despotic states, in the following words:—"Il y a pourtant une chose que l'on peut quelquefois opposer a la volonté du prince: c'est la religion. On abandonnera son père, on le tuera même si le prince l'ordonne mais on ne boira pas de vin s'il le veut et s'il l'ordonne. Les lois de la religion sont d'un précepte superieur, parce qu'elles sont donnés sur la tete du prince comme sur celle des sujets. Mais, quant au droit naturel, il n'en est pas de même: le prince est supposé n'être plus un homme."

The same author also pretends that the laws of religion correct the inconveniences of the political constitution. He says:—"Ainsi lorsque l'état est souvent agité par des guerres civiles la religion fera beaucoup si elle établit que quelques parties de cet état restent toujours en paix;" this he proves by examples of the customs of different countries; of the Greeks, Japanese, Arabian tribes, ancient Germans, &c.; and further proves that the laws of religion have had the effect of civic laws, before these were established. He next proves that the terrible laws and actions of the Spanish inquisition had their useful side in moderating the power of the despot of that country:—"Autant que le pouvoir du clergé est dangereux dans une république, autant est il convenable dans une monarchie, surtout dans celles qui vont au despotisme. Ou en seraient l'Espagne et le Portugal depuis la perte de leur lois, sans ce pouvoir qui arrête seul la puissance arbitraire? Barriere toujours bonne lorqu'il n'y en a point d'autre: car, comme le despotisme cause à la nature humaine des maux effroyables, le mal même qui le limite est un bien."

119. *Occupations of the Nobility.*

It will, however, be found that the one does not prevent the other, since hunting, steeple chases, and races, (which probably did not all exist in Alfred's time,) form a prominent part of the occupations of the nobles. These public diversions have been preserved, and almost encouraged by government, in the political point of view, of favouring the rearing of horses, and movement of money on those days. They probably have no idea of introducing the ancient tournaments, with the heavy-mailed knight, in place of the races and far-famed light jockeys. They have also rather overlooked the inconsequence of prohibiting lotteries, and permitting sweeps, &c. of the abuses of which we have many examples. The best side of the races is the fraternizing of many members of the aristocracy with the lower standing

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class in horse traffic, although produced by motives of interest. This amalgamation may be but momentary, but even then it proves useful to society.

"Si le faste et la splendeur qui environnent les rois font une partie de leur puissance, la modestie et la simplicité des manierès font la force des nobles aristocratiques. Quand ils n'affectent aucune distinction quand ils se confondent avec le peuple, quand ils sont vêtus comme lui, quand ils lui font partager tous leurs plaisirs, il oublie sa faiblesse."—MONTESQUIEU.

These principles are followed *à la lettre*, ☞ perrot-footmen.

120. *Parliamentary Eloquence.*

Eloquence has been practised in great perfection in modern times, and principally in the British parliament; and as the memory of the great orators is engraved in every heart, it would be quite superfluous to mention their names. The agitated time of the French revolution of '89 has also produced a number of clever orators; but the passionate character of their speeches has contributed to a greater extent to mislead the auditors, than to produce sound and reasonable principles or results. But in the present century, some orators of the French Chamber of Deputies have even surpassed those of the British parliament. In our opinion, France possesses at present but one clever orator; he convinces by sound reasons and superior eloquence whenever he wishes to do so; and be it said to his glory, he has had the courage, even in the present year, of being the first to defend moderation, in a time when it was difficult to render the voice of reason audible.

English orators prefer to convince by statistical arguments, than by clear and sound grounds, and to delude the auditors by a number of figures and returns, often erroneous. Like the French ex-minister, whom we have alluded to above, there is likewise one in England, represented on the right side of our vignette, who also possesses these oratorial qualities, and many more than the French ex-minister. He speaks now very seldom; but when he does, conviction is the result of his discourse. He is now in a passive state, but the power which he has preserved is even greater than that of the active leaders of the rudder of the state.

As an example of a convincing harangue, we quote that of Sir Francis Burdett, addressed to his electors in May 1837, which we think it our duty to give in its full extent.

"I always was a devoted supporter of the constitution of England, from the deepest conviction that there never was

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a system of government so admirably balanced as it is—so excellently tempered in every part—so harmoniously combining the advantages of every species of government. Many systems of government, it is true, have some particular feature to recommend them; but none of them have that counterbalancing power peculiar to our happy constitution: they all have some drawback which renders them inferior to our system of government. Our forefathers, in their prudence, courage, and good sense, erected for us a political fabric of that high degree of perfection which has been considered by the most learned of our philosophers* and statesmen as being the perfection of human policy, but which they considered so difficult of attainment as to be looked upon more as an agreeable dream than of national practicability; and which, if indeed attainable, could be of no duration. Now, in this great country, not only has such a system of government been carried out, but it has existed among us for six hundred years. I admit that we had, as our forefathers had, grievances which had grown up, and which required a remedy: we had the grievance of an imperfect representation in the House of Commons—boroughs were in the gift of individuals who trafficked in them: the remedy for this was a great but still a definite object. It did not involve anything by which all the great and glorious institutions of this country were to be subverted; but had in view a positive good, and that good within the limits of the constitution, which, indeed, it had in view to preserve and hand down, in all its excellence, and with all its blessings, to posterity, and (as I could wish) to all eternity. I was for that reform. We have attained this great end, and yet there are those who are still crying out for further reform. Their language is still 'Reform, reform, reform!' What, have we had no reform? Was the measure of which I speak no reform? It appears to me that every reasonable man would say, 'Let us, at least, have a little respite after this—let us, after the excitement produced in the course of a protracted struggle for reform, have a little breathing time, and have the prudence to see how it may be practically applied to the remedying of the abuses, for the correction of which it was introduced.' In explanation of my feelings on this ground, it is quite unnecessary for me to state that I am for the monarchical form of government, in preference to the rule of an elective council, or the control of a chief magistrate. The wisest of men have left it to us as the result of their experience, and the history of elective government confirms

* And also by those of other countries.

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it, that it is better for the public tranquillity and the enduring peace of the state, that the highest office of the country should not be the object of periodical contention. You hear people frequently talk of the liberty of the United States of America; but I say that the people of that country do not possess anything like that freedom and independence of mind, that toleration and freedom of action, which we enjoy in this country. For here there is no man, however humble he may be, who may not perform any political act not prescribed by the law as prejudicial to his fellow man. As an example of the excellence of our institutions, and the state of civilization in this country, I would direct your attention to the gentleman who has come forward as the hero of the radical party, so called, and the advocate of the objects which they have in view, and which they have the effrontery to avow as well, whose co-operation ministers have received with compliance, and, I might add, with thankfulness. I do not know whether that gentleman's father was the great coach-master; but if he was, he could not have a better-hearted man for a father. (An elector observed that the person alluded to was Mr. Leader's grandfather.) His grandfather! I have no doubt that the grandson is perfectly well educated, and fit for any station; indeed he has already filled the highest station to which an Englishman can aspire —that of a representative of the people; and the career of a laudable ambition is as open to him as the proudest noble of the country. This is the advantage of being an Englishman, and living under our much-calumniated system of government; and yet this advantage is what could not happen in any other country; but I am proud to say that instances of this nature happen every day in this free country. One of the greatest men now in England, the leading man in the House of Commons, Sir Robert Peel, is another example of what can be effected by great talents, united with activity and perseverance; and, when people talk of the aristocracy monopolizing all the honours of the country, it is so much stuff and nonsense. When, I ask, did the English aristocracy evince fastidiousness, or disdain—or, indeed, when have they refused to associate themselves familiarly with talented and deserving men of humble descent upon such occasions? There is nothing mischievous in the privileges of the aristocracy: if they have privileges, they were instituted for the benefit of the people at large, and they are necessary to, and congenial with, an enlightened, a free, and liberal government. I therefore maintain that the House of Lords,

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and their independence and privileges, should be as dear to every friend of England, as are freedom of action and impunity in the expression of opinion in the House of Commons; and, for my part, I cannot conceive a system of tyranny more terrible than that which will ensue, if the House of Commons had the power and the will to subvert the privileges of the House of Lords.

"It has also of late been much the fashion to asperse another venerable institution—that of the national Church of England. Now, I do not believe that so wise, so good, and so liberal a system of religious government, and so free in its results, exists on the face of the earth; nor is there another set of men in the aggregate—for here and there, as in every other community, bad members will be found—equally numerous, pious, learned, moral, kind, and benevolent as the clergy of this country. It is a blessing to the country that so many members of that sacred order are devoted to a country life; for they impart a blessing to the land—not interfering with any, but assisting the poor with the aids of charity and religious consolation, and delighting the rich by refined companionship and good instruction. I do not know a greater blessing in the country than that derived from the system of the Church of England. Many persons cast an envious eye on the wealth of the church. The church does not appear to me to be over-wealthy; but I look upon the wealth of the clergy as a fund belonging to the poorest peasant in England, if he manifest a peculiar talent for learning, a disposition for liberal acquirements, and an intellect beyond the common run, might derive the best education. This is another advantage attributable to the pious liberality of our forefathers. I could cite many instances in illustration of this fact, showing how children of the humblest origin have, by good conduct and attainments, raised themselves to the highest stations, after having been educated out of the wealthy endowments of the established church. I should like to know how much better the people would be if the wealth of the church were administered by any other body? A great deal has been said about the self-interestedness of the clergy. But surely they must, as well as other men, take care of their families. They do not put up for that exuberancy of virtue which the Roman Catholic priests profess; but they spend a great part of their income in hospitality and charity—advancing the progress of science, and encouraging the progress of literature, in several ways. There may be abuses in the church, but

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whatever the abuses are they do not harm the people. If the people think that a clergyman can live upon £200 a year, reading prayers every Sunday, visiting amongst the poor, and dwelling in a cottage, they are much mistaken. A clergyman is obliged to fill a certain station, which he never could sustain out of that scanty income. I do not see any good that can result out of so-called church reformation. I do not see what good it has done in Ireland. I am nothing—Mr. Leader is nothing—we are as but straws; but if the principle which I struggle for should be victorious, you will have achieved a great triumph for the English constitution, and the glorious institutions of the country."

Some of the orator's remarks can only be applied to his own time, but others to ours also.

121. Vide Notes 92 and 93.

122. *Members of Society are not all alike.*

Every man in society abdicates the right of being his own governor; he abandons even the right of self-defence, the first law of nature, to the leader or king whom he has selected. It matters not whether it be a temporary general, or an hereditary king, to whom he gives up the state of equality wherein all the power and jurisdiction is reciprocal, and none have a greater share than another; but like at Rome or at Sparta, the power given to the *general* ceases after the campaign is over.

123. *General Happiness.*

The maxim of all men having the same right to happiness, founded on the law of nature, has produced great evils from its false application by the socialists; for the idle cannot pretend to the same share of happiness as the industrious; and when Locke said, that "*Creatures of the same specie and rank, promiscuously born to all the same advantages of nature, and the use of the same faculties, should also be equal one amongst another, without subordination or subjection;*" he at the same time made it evident that this quality of men by nature forms the foundation of their obligation to mutual love, and the duties that they owe one another, from whence is derived the great maxims of justice and charity. This is more clearly expressed by Hooker in the following words:—

"The like natural inducement hath brought men to know that it is no less their duty to love others than themselves, for seeing those things which are equal, must needs all have

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one measure; if I cannot but wish to receive good, even as much at every man's hands, as any man can wish unto his own soul, how should I look to have any part of my desire herein satisfied, unless myself be careful to satisfy the like desire, which is undoubtedly in other men. We all being of one and the same nature; to have anything offered them repugnant to this desire, must needs, in all respects, grieve them as much as me, so that if I do harm, I must look to suffer, there being no reason that others should show greater measure of love to me, than they have by me showed unto them; my desire therefore to be loved of my equals in nature, as much as possible may be, imposeth upon me a natural duty of bearing to themward fully the like affection; from which relation of equality between ourselves and them, that are as ourselves, what several rules and canons, natural reason hath drawn for direction of life, no man is ignorant."—*Eccl. Pol.* lib. i.

"A state must be formed to make as many as possible happy." This is rather difficult; and mostly so in extensive realms. The example that we have given of the little republic of Hamburg cannot be easily imitated in great monarchies, for nature seems very steril in producing men capable of preserving such general happiness; but the question is, what do we really understand by happiness? Is it the possession of large estates, considerable stocks, vain pleasures, &c.; or, the acquirement of the necessities of life by constant labour and exertion, and fulfilment of our duty? In our opinion, those who bear the latter fate are as happy and more so than the former, whom they fatten by the sweat of their brow, and who from their spleen are generally the most unhappy of the two. In this point of view, England surpasses every other country in the world, for nowhere else is there a population so laborious, and who fulfil their duty to their families and the state to such a degree. And if education could reduce the number of idlers and criminals, and their expenses were brought to a level with their income by an improved national economy, England would in reality be the happiest country in the world.

124. *Does a Monarch enjoy perfect Happiness?*

We cannot understand why Haller, as a philosopher, could commit such an error as to think for one moment that a monarch can enjoy perfect happiness. This he can only after he has returned to private life, and even then we cannot believe that he can be compared to a sage who has

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renounced all terrestrial enjoyments. No man enjoys perfect happiness, and least of all a monarch; and we doubt whether, with all his virtues, even Alfred enjoyed it; for in doing good our ardent desire of doing more than is within our power is continually aroused; certainly it does not appear to be the destination of man to enjoy perfect happiness.

124a. *Dignities of the State conferred on Children.*

We have, in a former note, defended the rights of the aristocracy, and of their privileges by birth; but never would we go so far as to defend the ridicule and flattery of appointing a child the governor of a province, or an admiral. In a German country, which was not so fortunate as to possess a constitution until 1848, every prince began his military career as a common soldier, and only acquired higher grades by advancement.

125. *Men are not all alike.*

The truth of this thesis has been sufficiently proved by philosophers of all times, and it was a folly of the present epoch that a class of men pretended the contrary. As the qualities and capacities of all men are not alike, we cannot allot them all the same advantages. Men found in wildernesses, even under our climate, were not intellectual enough to understand not only human sounds, but even signs, being as shy as they were ferocious. Can we pretend that such beings are equal to civilized men?*

126. *Bombastical Eloquence.*

In Note 120, we have acknowledged the advantages of eloquence; but the eloquence of statesmen, based on principles and realities, cannot be compared to that which merely contains pomp of words, beautiful sentences, composed of poetical fiction, and Machiavelian thesis, as were distributed in 1848 by the president of a republic, whose political career was but of short duration.

127. *Men rising from common occupations to high dignities.*

We perceive here that our Swiss author belongs to the aristocracy, and that this was written before the French revolution of '89. Modern times have proved the contrary; and, not to cite many examples, we will only mention Joseph Hume, who was "not prepared by education for politics,"

* Proved by the savage who was found in the forest of Hanover, and brought to England during the reign of George I.

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but has "acquired experience from practice," and is a very useful defender of the people's liberties, notwithstanding his unsuccessful efforts and rhetorical blunders.

127a.

The word "Dacia" has here been incorrectly spelt "Datia." We beg the reader will excuse, if in a few instances, such words have escaped the attention of the reviser.

128. *Despotism of the People the worst Tyranny.*

In democracies the people are, according to Montesquieu, "*A certain égard le monarque à certain autre le sujet;*" but if the people forget that both essential qualities must at all times be amalgamated, and will play the sovereign, they are the worst despots that can be imagined; for their unbounded will, as has been proved by recent events, produces even more evil than that of the worst Roman emperors, not excluding Caligula, Claudius, Nero, Otho, Vitellius, Commodus, Heliogabalus, and Caracalla.

129. "*Those are real Tyrants who consider their will as the only existing Law.*"

Tyranny has been practised by despots, in republics, where the aristocracy prevailed, and in democracies, where the people overcame every power. But there is another tyranny which we consider no better, but rather worse than these, and that is the tyranny over public opinion, which in former times was practised by the clergy, and principally by the Jesuits, and in modern times by public papers. The power of the press is really greater than any other; and although it may be checked by newspapers of other tendencies and opinions, government possesses too many means of influencing one or two of the leading papers, thereby obliging the public to share their opinion almost reluctantly.

There is one such a paper—the only one in the world—which possesses greater power than either the British government, the upper or lower house, or any monarch, republic, or even standing army on the globe. Impartiality calls upon us to acknowledge that the independence of that paper, and its immense power, are in most instances employed to defend right, attack injustice, and censure the slightest grievance that may threaten society; but truth at the same time forces us to state that it too often abuses its power, and employs it to overwhelm every opinion contrary to its own design. If we look upon it as a government paper only, its course

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may be accounted for; but as it takes the appearance of standing above the government, and having only the general welfare in view, it is the more to be blamed, as its influence is greater; for it is below its dignity to deafen the ears of the public to truth, and to weaken the sounds of good reason by sarcasm and personality, which it is not their place to be in. If any individual be so unfortunate as to have offended that power which creeps in the dark, and can only be recognized by the flashes which it darts against its opponents, it revenges itself most cruelly, and does not cease until it has brought him so low, that he can never more rise. It is that which we call "Tyranny of the Press," and the more so since not only governmental but personal influence can operate upon this power, which "*vend son sceptre au poids.*"

What good could such a powerful institution not produce, if, instead of its Machiavelian principles, it only listened to those of real patriotism, right, and humanity?

130. *The King and the People.*

The sense of the words in italics is but too often forgotten or disregarded by the courtiers and public officers. Every one of them should have them engraved on a plate on his breast, or his arm. In the words "*Dieu et mon droit,*" the comma is omitted. No man can object to a monarch using this device, as implying to adore God and defend his right; but they should not be united, because the monarch has obtained his right from the nation.

131. *Ultra-conservatives.*

132. "*Every Countryman should work for himself.*"

It is eighty years since those words were written by our German author. What would the condition of Ireland now be had they been appreciated by the Irish landlords and the legislators of Great Britain? There is nothing new in them, and the thesis or principle is universally known, and was probably originally written more for Germany than for England. The estate holders in Germany and other countries have since become enlightened enough to give up a part of their privileges, and increase their incomes by dividing their property. The same was done in France, and it is to be regretted that, from the blindness of the Irish, who have obstinately resisted every kind of amelioration, and lowered their country to such a degree, the number of criminals is altogether disproportionate to that of the inhabitants.

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133. *Law of Primogeniture.*

Haller is here more liberal in his views than Montesquieu, who says that—"Les lois doivent oté entre les nobles, afin que, par le partage continuel de succession, les fortunes se remettent toujours dans l'egalité." But this he only applies to the aristocracy of a republic like Venice, &c. But of monarchical governments, he says:—"On peut permettre de laisser la plus grande partie de ses biens à un seul de ses enfans: cette permission n'est même bonne que la." We will not take upon ourselves to decide this question,—"dans une nation ou la république se cache sous la forme d'une monarchie."

134. Vide Note 114.

135. *Leagues may be considered as little States in the Realm.*

This occurred in Alfred's time, and the physical powers of cities and boroughs were employed to attain that purpose. The same still exists, excepting that other means are applied, and principally that of influencing the public opinion; for, cotton leagues, shipping leagues, agricultural leagues, chartist, and other leagues form themselves now as then, and combat for their private interests, under pretence of the general welfare.

136. *Reformation should be pursued by degrees.*

All men who have moderated their opinion by study and experience will think, like Alfred, that "most evils should not be removed by a strong remedy;" and that "only a long series of mild measures are necessary to improve the state, without putting it in inevitable danger." But the high officers of government do not, for the most part, remain long enough in their functions to execute these gradual improvements; even the British minister, whom we alluded to in Note 120, had a too short political existence for his efforts to be justly appreciated; his successors do not appear to possess sufficient energy, but totter in the execution of their plans, (if they have any,) and notwithstanding their wishes of doing all parties justice, often do too much, and often too little.

137. *French Deputies under the last Government.*

We need hardly observe in what manner a portion of the French deputies were mis-used under the last French

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monarchy, and were made tools of oppression, instead of being intercessors for the people.

138. *Fertile Lands changed into Deserts.*

It would be doubting the reader's capacities to cite examples of this.

139. *Alfred's Registration of Acres.*

We must here excuse an error which occurred in the fourth line, page 132, *herds* having been written for *hides*. This measure of ground is calculated by Spelman as one hundred acres, and by Littleton otherwise. According to the former, the space is so great, that it could not be ploughed in less than one year. According to the latter, it was a space of land that produced enough to nourish a noble family with their attendants.

140. *Population of Alfred's Dominions.*

The figure of six thousand souls, which Haller mentions as having lived in England in Alfred's time, seems rather small, and may be subjected to correction, even if we admit Alfred's realm to have then been only composed of the counties known under the appellation of Wessex.

141. *Origin of Annual Parliamentary Sessions.*

This appears to have been the origin of the annual sessions of parliament in the autumn; but the custom has since been for preparatory business alone to be done in parliament at such epochs, unless the sittings were, as they now are, postponed to the month of January.

142. *Voluntary Gifts and Taxes.*

Voluntary gifts to the crown have taken place both in ancient and modern times. All good-hearted people are ready to make, at any moment, a sacrifice, when they behold the country in danger. We find examples of this as far back as the time of the Carthaginians:—

"In the third Punian war, the Romans claimed all the ships that the Carthaginians had built since the last peace, under pretence of an armament destined for a breach of peace. They gave them up, and saw them burnt before their own eyes. The Romans then ordered them to quit the coast, and to build a new town in the interior of the country, and far from the sea.

"The Carthaginians upon receiving this information were

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struck with terror; but, rather than accede to this, they unanimously declared themselves for war, with the exception of one of the Suffetians, who was stoned to death. They then resolved to bring all wooden moveables, even furniture and huts, to the docks, to build a new fleet. All the gold and silver, the metal of the grandees, the sepulchral ornaments of magistrates and heroes, the sacred vessels, the treasures of the temples, the ploughs, scythes, and all spareable implements were melted and cast into weapons. The whole feminine sex cut off their hair to twist into cords and ropes. All the inhabitants, without regard to rank, age, or sex, contributed every thing in their power to defend their old city."—*The Ship: its Origin and Progress.*

Many instances of similar generosity in modern times, and even the latest epochs, might be cited from the English and other nations, and especially in Prussia in 1813, to free Germany from the French yoke; and in Paris after the revolution of 1848. It is lamentable that these voluntary gifts are often mis-used; but such is the lot of all gifts and contributions, whether voluntary or enforced. When society shall have attained such perfection that the amount of all revenues may be considered as well employed, we may indeed pretend to have reached the pinnacle of civilization. At present the budget presents heavy figures, unbalanced by light arguments, and against which all objections are regarded as chicanery of the opposition; the questions addressed to the leaders of the state, concerning these expenses, are but vaguely argued. The Chinese, *sauvent mieux les apparences*, and if taxes are there most strictly enforced, in the fourteenth maxim of the Emperor Kang-he, (in which he recommends to his subjects "to complete the payment of the taxes, in order to prevent frequent urgency;") he gives explanatory reasons of the destination of the taxes, namely: "for the expenses of the salaries of the mandarins, that they may rule our people; to pay the army, that they may protect our people; of preparing for years of scarcity, that our people may be fed; as these are all collected from the empire, so they are all employed for its use. How then can it be supposed that the granaries and treasury of the sovereign are intended to injure the people that he may nourish himself? Since our dynasty established the tripod until now, the proportions of the revenue have been fixed by an universally approved statute; and all the other unjust items have been completely cancelled: *a thread or a hair* too much is not demanded from the people."

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We will not take *trop a la lettre* this last promise; but still find it very condescending of a Chinese despot to express himself in such terms. Our European governors do not trouble themselves so far, but leave us blindly to believe that the revenue of all taxes are well employed. A rule of Montesquieu on taxes, "qu'on peut lever les tribus plus forts à proportion de la liberté du sujet," is exactly followed in England; and as freedom is very *dear* to every English heart, we do not mind it so much if it costs a little *dear*. This spirited author afterwards confirms that maxim as follows:—"Il y a dans les états modérés un dédomagement pour la pesanteure des tribus: c'est la liberté. Il y a dans les états despotiques un equivalent pour la liberté: c'est la modicité des tribus."*

143. *Assent to the Annual Budget.*

We refer the reader to the preceding note, having only to add, that besides some few exceptions of the opposition, the remainder *nicken mit dem Kopfe und sagen "ja."*

Legion of Officers for collecting Taxes.

Haller speaks here of indirect duties and their faults, the opinions on which are divided everywhere. Most of the inhabitants of all countries are inclined towards the philanthropical system, and believe it would be better for every one to bear a heavy but direct burthen; for if all hands take up the weight at once, although one may receive a greater and another a lesser share, and the whole weight is the same, yet each thinks the burthen lighter.

In England the partizans of each opinion are directly opposed by free trade and protectionists. We, the author, incline neither to the one nor the other side; we hate, indeed, the degrading vexations of the customs' officers in all countries, and really think that their power ought to be considerably checked, and the duties for the most part lessened, or even abolished, yet our love for truth and impartiality forbids us to admit the following maxims of Montesquieu, which require the greatest attention, and form a considerable weight in the scale on the side of the opponents of free trade:—"L'impot par tête est plus naturel à la servitude; l'impot sur la marchandise est plus naturel à la liberté, parce qu'il se rapporte d'une manière moin directe à la personne." He further says, that in despotic governments

* In Russia the taxes were very moderate, but they have been increased since the despotism has been somewhat moderated.

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the prince grants lands to his military and his officers, because he imposes but light taxes. We will pass over this portion, and come to his other remark, which seems to us of the greatest import. "Le tribut naturel au gouvernement modéré est l'impôt sur les marchandises. Cet impôt étant réellement payé par l'acheteur, quoique le marchand l'avance est un prêt que le marchand a déja fait à l'acheteur: ainsi il faut regarder le négociant et comme le débiteur général de l'etat, et comme le créancier de tous les particuliers. Il avance à l'etat le droit que l'acheteur lui payera quelque jour; et il a payé, pour l'acheteur, le droit qu'il a payé pour la marchandise. On sent donc que plus le gouvernement est modéré, que plus l'esprit de liberté règne, que plus les fortunes ont de sûreté, plus il est facile au marchand d'avancerà l'etat, et de préter au particulier des droits considérables. En Angleterre, un marchand prète réellement a l'etat cinquante ou soixante livres sterling à chaque tonneau de vin qu' il recoit. Quel est le marchand qui oserait faire une chose de cette espèce dans un pays gouverné comme la Turquie? et, quand il l'oserait faire, comment le pourrait il, avec une fortune suspecte, incertaine, ruinée?"

We cannot deny that the above maxim, although written a hundred years ago, contains much truth; but the question is, whether it be really applicable to our time? We observe that it is a forced and very expensive loan from merchants to government, all kinds of loans bear something pernicious with them, but this, we think, more than any, from the present manner of levying the duties, from the expense of a "legion of officers," and from the small degree of *bonne foi* trusted to the payers of these taxes.

When Montesquieu wrote these lines, he was probably far from supposing that towns would be connected, and the vast distances reduced, by means of railways and steam navigation, and thus many obstacles to the human enjoyment of the produce of the globe are removed. Whether such obstacles are favourable to trade in general or not, is a question already decided by economists and men of experience; and if the old school pretends that commerce is favoured by secrecy and obstacles, (as fishing in troubled water,) and that Mercury, its patron, protects it as being placed between *bonne foi* and fraud; we have now a better opinion of it, and have experienced that publicity and the removal of obstacles do not injure trade so much as conservatives fear. Many objections have been made to the

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cheapness which free trade and abundance produces, and a political one, lately suggested by a talented writer, that "in a heavily taxed country a general rise in price must be a public benefit, and a fall in price a public calamity," requires also some attention: "The value of the annual produce of the United Kingdom, including everything raised or manufactured by our twenty-nine millions of people, has been recently estimated to amount to about £448,000,000. Assuming our revenue, with all the costs of collection, to be £56,000,000—and a lower sum cannot suffice for the necessities of the country—then one-eighth of the whole national produce is swept into the imperial exchequer. But, suppose such a general rise of prices to take place, as that the national produce, instead of being worth £448,000,000 in money value, became worth double that sum; then, as the charge of taxation remained fixed, only one sixteenth part of the produce raised by our toiling millions would go into the exchequer, instead of one-eighth. On the other hand, suppose that, by a general fall of prices, the whole annual produce of the country only realized £224,000,000 in money value, then the the £56,000,000 of taxation would be equal to one-fourth of it. Thus, the per centage charge of taxation becomes heavier as prices decline, and lighter as prices advance."

Most of the French papers also pretend, that it is a sound policy to raise legislatively the prices of all things by the operations of the tariffs; but tariffs only raise the prices of things because they diminish the quantity offered in the market; and ought abundance, indeed, to be dreaded and scarcely to be desired? We shall try to trace this illusion to its source. "It is seen that a man becomes rich in proportion as he draws a greater profit from his work, that is to say, according as he sells at a higher price. He sells at a higher price, in proportion to the rarity or scarcity of the kind of product which is the object of his industry. Hence it is concluded that, with regard to him at least, scarcity enriches him. Applying successively that reasoning to all manufacturers and producers, the theory of scarcity is deduced. Hence we pass to the application; and, in order to favour all classes of producers, dearness is artificially excited, the scarcity of everything is brought about by prohibition, restriction, the abolition of machines, and other analogous means. The same reason may be pursued in the case of abundance. It is observed, that when any particular

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produce abounds, it is sold at a low price, then the producer gains less. If all producers are in the same situation, they are all miserable; it is their abundance which ruins society. And as all conviction seems to be embodied in fact, it is seen that in most countries the laws of men are opposed to the abundance of things. This sophism, if clothed in a general form, would, perhaps, make little impression; but applied to a particular order of facts, to such or such branch of industry, to any given class of producers, it is extremely specious, which may be thus explained. It is a syllogism, not false, but incomplete. But whatever there may be which is true in a syllogism, is always and necessarily present to the mind. On the other hand, incompleteness is a negative quality, an absent datum, which it is very possible, and even very easy, to hold of no account. Man produces in order to consume. He is at the same time a producer and a consumer. The reasoning which I have just established considers him only under the first of these points of view. Under the second, we should have arrived at an opposite conclusion. Might it not in truth be said,—the consumer is inasmuch more rich, as he buys all things cheaper; he buys things cheaper in proportion to their abundance; their abundance enriches him; and this reasoning, extended to all consumers, would conduct to the theory of abundance. It is the imperfectly comprehended notion of exchange which produces these illusions. If we consult our personal interest, we distinctly recognise that it is two-fold. As sellers, we are interested in the dearness of the article, and by consequence in its rarity; as buyers, in a cheap market, or, what is the same, in the abundance of things."

We have extracted the last paragraph from the articles on scarcity and abundance, in Mr. Potter's clever translation of M. Bastiat's "Sophismes Economiques;" and we regret that our space does not allow us to give more of that article. We will therefore merely add Mr. Potter's note on the same:—"The error into which the author has here allowed himself to fall, is beginning to be understood in England, where large profits are made by means of low prices. It is found that greater gains are made by catering for *the million*, than by providing for the demands of the affluent. Weekly journals, which if sold at prices until lately general, would certainly not pay their expenses, are made to yield handsome incomes to all connected with them, when sold at prices that bring them within the reach of the many. For the extensive application of this discovery, which

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is not now confined to matters of literature, but is fast being extended to a great variety of objects, in a way that adds most importantly to the comfort and enjoyment of the labouring classes, we are under much obligation to the Messrs. Chambers, of Edinburgh, and to the able and ingenious publisher of the 'Penny Magazine.'"

Mr. Potter further says, in his note:—"We cannot simplify and cheapen any article of use or consumption without adding to the sum of human enjoyment. Even in the case, if any such case can be found, of articles, the use of which cannot be increased by making them cheaper, the consumer will, when they shall be cheaper, have greater means left at his disposal for procuring other objects of desire, while the capital of the producer will be in part set free, and will be employed for the preparation of the increased quantities of objects so demanded."*

144. *Right of levying Taxes vested in the House of Commons.*

According to this principle the House of Commons possesses entirely the means of granting supplies for the public service; and from this important privilege a truly gigantic power is intrusted to them (on which, indeed, hangs the great balance of the constitution,)—the sole right of levying taxes, and supplying subsidies to the executive.

It is known that every bill, whether private or public, which has for its object the raising of money, must originate in the House of Commons; and whatever bills of this nature are sent up to the House of Lords, the Lords are only allowed simply to reject or to pass them.

This power has come to be invested in the Commons, not from abstract theory, or by the abgregation of reason, *a priori*; for it is very difficult, indeed, to show its consistency with the general principles of the law of nature, or with the deductions of reason; but it has intermixed with the constitution in the course of its experimental working. It cannot arise from the circumstance, that the money is voted by the Commons independent of the Lords; for the taxes are supplied from the whole property of the kingdom. The Commons do not furnish the supplies, and have no power whatever to collect them: this rests with the executive; but it has been found expedient, in the practice of government, that the power of measuring the expenses of the

* We beg the reader will decide whether it is better to have cheap or dear productions, as we are not convinced by either of the arguments.

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state, and voting the amount proper for sustaining the different branches of public management, should rest in one assembly, in order that no dissension may arise on a subject which might clog the wheels of government by delay. No question can arise with the Sovereign or Lords as to the supply being too much or too little; the vote of the House of Commons at once decides the amount; and thus the money transactions of the state proceed with regularity and despatch. This high trust has been confided to the House of Commons undoubtedly for the benefit of the whole nation, and not for the purpose of being converted into an engine of destruction to the other branches of government. In confiding this trust, the constitution has not left it with them to decide as to whether there shall or shall not be a supply, but, generally, to say what shall be the amount of that supply. This power is very properly vested in the elective body of the legislature, because it represents all the interests of the community, and must be supposed to have the closest sympathy with the various classes of society, and not so easily to be influenced by private motives: but, though the elective body be thus distinguished, it has no legal warrant or moral power, by the exercise of it, to contravene the laws of the constitution under which they have been elected. They have no more power to refuse all supplies than they have to declare the constitution to be at an end. They are the assessors, in many cases, within certain limits, and, under particular statutes, of the compensations and payments to be awarded and paid to public functionaries, in order that the existing authorities may not lack the immediate means of carrying on the affairs of the country to the country's honour: but to refuse any part of these means, for the purpose of coercing the constituted authorities into measures in no way connected with the monetary affairs of the state, would be a high crime and misdemeanor in law, and a gross fraud and malversation of authority in conscience.

145. *Burden shaken from one to another.*

If this hypothesis be true, it is not astonishing that most of the aristocracy are conservatives; but a recent case has proved that their resistance to all great measures for the welfare of the state is very moderate, even if such measures have not won their approbation. They hate disunion and political changes, and therefore yield when necessity requires.

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146. *Revenue of the Church.*

We beg to refer our readers to some former notes on this subject

147. *Subjection of all Ranks to Taxes.*

Some examples in executions for poor-rate prove that persons of the highest rank are subjected to that rule.

148. *Proportion of Taxes.*

The proposition of Amund seems at first sight somewhat paradoxical, as the state needs in time of war greater sacrifices than in time of peace; and were that not the case, the national debts of most countries would not be so augmented as they actually are. But probably he set out from the principle, that in time of war the incomes of individuals are considerably less than in time of peace; and on that account the equilibrium which a man can bear is re-established. We are, however, very glad that Amund is satisfied with the twentieth, and, at most, the tenth part of the public income; for if we calculate all the direct taxes that every man is obliged to pay to the state by indirect ones, (which it would be superfluous to enumerate,) we can boldly assert that he pays to the state half his income. There would be no harm in it if those forced gifts were only well employed. But as it is, we are reminded of the paternal Chinese imperial edict, which says—"That the taxes should be paid at the term, and a man should not want to be urged; *then* you may take what is over and nourish your parents, complete the marriage ceremonies of your sons and daughters, satisfy your morning and evening wants, and prepare for the annual feasts and sacrifices." In the amplification of that maxim in the sacred edict, the matter is not more plausibly explained:—"It is necessary that you *first* complete the payment of your taxes, and with the little money which you have over you may buy some good things, by which to manifest filial piety to your parents, the authors of your life; and to show your affection to your brothers and sisters, who lay in the same womb, and sucked the same breasts. Again, you may also be able to complete the great things, *viz.* the marriage of your daughters and sons; your own daily food and clothing, and the [ceremonies of the] times and seasons. All these you may be able by degrees duly to regulate." Englishmen pay taxes, and *then* take what is over!

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149. *Illusive freedom.*

"The free German [the descendant of the German] will not be bound." He consequently likes to bear iron fetters enveloped in flowers. He willingly gives, and more than he ought, to society, imagining that he is free; and if this illusion makes him happy, why should we deprive him of it?

150. *Foundation of the British Constitution.*

We have in a former note already explained the basis and most important pillars of the British constitution, which consist in the application of that principle.

151. *Reforms in Legislation.*

About the end of the last century, Romilly, Bentham, Mackintosh, Michael Angelo Taylor, and other reformers, proved that the laws of England were not what they assumed to be. In 1828, Lord Brougham, in a masterly address, brought the subject of legal abuses before parliament; and that extraordinary effort of luminous and convincing eloquence proved not wholly fruitless to the nation. The author lived from that time mostly in England, and what he saw, heard, and experienced in law matters, has convinced him that nothing essential has been done in the way of reform.

Certainly, if a foreigner, after reading Blackstone, was informed that the judges of England met together on certain occasions, to discuss questions so difficult, as to be reserved for their united wisdom, he would form to himself a notion of all that was most wise, venerable, and imposing. At such a gathering of sages, he would naturally think must be congregated all that practical wisdom, the fruit of grey experience and exact theory, the result of long and intimate acquaintance with the treasured wisdom of ages, that could bear upon the conflicting and shifting phenomena of life. At such a meeting, all the great doctrines upon which the fabric of society, whatever be its form, must ultimately rest, must needs be sifted, examined, and illustrated.

But great would be the disappointment of the stranger when he learned that the time of so august an appeal has been wasted in discussions of trifling objects in the form, and not in the spirit of the law. The new example of late court-sittings attests what an uncertain lottery the British judicature is; how the innocent may be punished, and the guilty escape, under favour of a system, in which the worst precedent often overrules all reason, and retards all justice. But cruelty, delay, and uncertainty, are not the only public

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hardships resulting from the retention of old laws, usages, forms, and obsolete or questionable institutes. Other evils, moral as well as legal, flow from the same deleterious source. Oath-making, affidavit-making, solemn affirmations of religious belief, declaration against bribery at elections, or on the property qualification of members of parliament, against corruption in the disposal of civil offices of East India patronage, against the supremacy of the pope, and in favour of the Protestant succession and the Protestant Church establishment,—all these, in many cases, are held to be forms only, but they are pernicious forms, the superfluous observance of which has tended to undermine the security of public and private transactions, and impair immeasurably the general integrity and veracity of the community. We therefore heartily wish that Amund's observation may be appreciated by those whose occupation it is to give laws to the country.

152. *Obedience to the Laws.*

We are convinced that there is no country in the world where the prescription of the laws in general are more obeyed and considered than in England. The great number of criminals must here be set aside, and cannot be opposed to our observation, which concerns civil rights and peaceable men, who acknowledge their laws are made to be obeyed; while in other countries they are partly considered as having been made to be evaded: and it is the more astonishing, since most of the inhabitants of Great Britain confess that the existing laws are not satisfactory, and their application still less so. The middle classes, who often speak "*wie ihnen der Schnabel gewachsen ist*," say, "I don't like law; I hate lawyers, &c." because they know but too well the abuses of the law, and have not judgment enough to have the inner conviction that the "laws are also salutary to the individual bound by them."

153. *Men should moderate their desires.*

It is very difficult to convince man that "the fulfilment of his desires will but make him unhappy." Many philosophers pretend that men in a state of nature are inclined to evil. Others, that they are timid; and others again, like Hobbes, that their natural state is that of war, and that they are inclined to subject each other. It is only by education that they can be brought to conquer their passions; and to attain this, the most effectual education is that which Rousseau has employed in his "Emile"—experience. It is only

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by experience, and sometimes by very *hard* experience, that man learns that "the fulfilment of his desires will but make him unhappy."

154. *Punishments must be mild but inevitable.*

How can the punishment be inevitable when the conclusion of law-suits are enigmas, even to the most experienced men? The punishment for capital crimes is known by all; but those of a lesser degree vary in countries where no positive code exists, as we have already mentioned, according as the case may be considered by the judges. As concerns the mildness of punishments, we have already given our opinion in a former note.

155. *Public Appointments obtained by favour.*

We here perceive that liberties, privileges, and licenses could only be obtained by the commoners; but as appointments are granted by the crown, and most of its officers, that law is paralyzed; and we boldly ask, whether *favour* does not often displace *merit?* To give examples of this is not our task.

The British constitution itself possesses a remedy in the stipulation that the sovereign may create new offices, and affix new titles to them, but cannot create new fees for their support; nor can the crown annex new fees to old offices, as this would be a tax on the subject, which cannot be imposed but by parliament.

156. *Privy Council.*

The sovereign of Great Britain is assisted by the privy council, of which the number in ancient times was limited to twelve; afterwards it increased to so large a number that it was found inconvenient; and in the reign of Charles II. its number was limited to thirty; but since that time the number has been gradually augmented, and now continues indefinite.

As it is evident that among so many secrecy and despatch could not always be secured, nor responsibility effectually exacted, the sovereign is advised and attended by another council, the members of which, *ex officio*, are members of the privy council, and which is "THE CABINET COUNCIL." The eminent individuals who compose this council are intrusted with all the important affairs of government, both domestic and foreign, and with the highest administrative power in the state: hence, with their colleagues in office, it is called

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"THE ADMINISTRATION." The members of this council receive their appointment from the prime minister, who is selected by the sovereign, and empowered by royal authority to form the council and the whole administration, by choosing such individuals as coincide with him in principle, and who are likely to co-operate with him in carrying out the system of government which he has adopted.

157. *Surveyance over Counsellors.*

This surveyance over the counsellors of the king is not always effectual in its practice, as they seldom render an account of their actions until it is *too late* to repair them; and the representatives of the people must very often be satisfied with being informed that the matter is not ripe for communication: but even that responsibility is a check to their unbridled will, and, in some cases, does not fail in its result.

158. *Voice of the People.*

It is very difficult for the sovereign to discover what the "voice of the people" really signifies. Public addresses to the monarch or his government are for the most part constructed by some leader, bearing the signatures of a great number of individuals, who cannot be considered as competent in the matter, and with whom *quantity* cannot replace *quality*. But it is, at the same time, very unpopular to ridicule such addresses, even if they are "monstrous." The right of openly speaking and petitioning should never be oppressed, *not even in a critical moment.* Speaking, though ever so free, is not a crime, unless accompanied by action. "Les paroles," says Montesquieu, "ne forment point un corps de délit, elles ne restent que dans l'idée. La plupart du temps elles ne signifient point par elle-mêmes, mais par le ton dont on les dit. Souvent, en redisant les mêmes paroles, on ne rend pas le même sens: le sens depend de la liaison qu'elles ont avec d'autres choses. Quelquefois le silence exprime plus que tous les discours. Il n'y a rien de si équivoque que tout cela. Comment donc en faire un crime de lèse-majesté? Partout où cette loi est établie, nonseulement la liberté n'est plus, mais son ombre même." . . "Les actions ne sont pas de tous les jours, bien des gens peuvent les remarquer; une fausse accusation sur des faits peut être aisément éclaircie. Les paroles qui sont jointes à une action prennent la nature de cette action. Ainsi un homme qui va dans la place publique exhorter les sujets à la revolte, devient coupable de lèse-majesté, parce que les paroles sont

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jointes à l'action et y participent. Ce ne sont point les paroles que l'on punit, mais une action commise, dans laquelle on emploie les paroles. Elles ne deviennent des crimes que lorsqu'elles préparent, qu'elles accompagnent ou qu'elles suivent une action criminelle. On renverse tout, si l'on fait des paroles un crime capital, au lieu de les regarder comme le signe d'un crime capital."

"Les écrits contiennent quelqe chose de plus permanent que les paroles; mais, lorsqu'ils ne préparent pas au crime de lèse-majesté ils ne sont point une matière de lèse-majesté."

Satirical writings and caricatures, even if personal, are not considered as libels in England, for the political motive, that they are usually directed against the powerful, that they flatter general malignity, comfort the discontented, lessen the desire for high offices, and impart such patience to the people as to make them laugh at their own sufferings.

159. *Use of the rejecting power of a King.*

This right has lately been used (or abused) by an European monarch; and although it may be contrary to the opinion of philanthropists and philosophers, we wish that this remedy, perhaps an evil of itself, would be sanctioned by success in appeasing the disordered states of Germany, and the remainder of Europe. But monarchs and ministers have no right to oppress liberty, even for the purpose of maintaining peace and preventing anarchy. All good-hearted men will, however, rather suppress their feelings and give up some of their privileges than favour the latter.

160. *Influence practised on Electors.*

We do not see how this can be prevented, since the speeches and letters of candidates to electoral bodies are so very frequent and lead to so many abuses. They flatter the electors, confess principles which their hearts are not at all disposed to follow; and if they happen to be at the same time members of the government, they promise heaven and earth, golden mountains, and arcadian felicity; and, after all, generally "strive more after their own aggrandizement than that of their country."

161. *Such an honest Man, who supports with patience the loss of the esteem of his Party, exists even now.*

The deputies of our time do, for the most part, the contrary to that which Alfred feared. Their electors have little power over them, and they strive more after the

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applause of the premier than after that of the people. But modern history has shown to us in other countries many "honest men who opposed themselves to the imprudent will of the misled people," and to them may be attributed the restoration of peace.

162. *Do Representatives strive to increase their power?*
This also took place lately in other countries, where the constitutions were but shortly established. The young deputies were not cool enough for their functions, and lost their newly acquired right by requiring too much. The British representatives consequently keep to the opposite extreme, and require too little.

163. *Mischief caused by the power of the People.*
Example: The 1st of June, 1848, in Paris; Rome in 1849; and the errors and crimes recently committed in many other cities and countries.

164. *Deputies and their Electors.*
The "honourable member for ——" is an expression adopted in parliamentary debates, instead of the personal name of the member, which should be abolished, because it is quite useless to remind a deputy at every opportunity that he has been elected for such a county, town, or borough, as he is considered more as the representative and defender of the rights of the nation, than of those who elected him. Once elected, the power of the electors is no more until a new election takes place: this point of view, which we think is the right one, cannot be brought too often before the notice of the members and the electors.

165. *Members of the Opposition.*
The opposition is generally composed of troublesome citizens, whose motives we may, however, consider as very laudable, when they only "disdain the *good* because it is not the *best*." Such men should not be morally killed by sarcasm, even if they do not succeed, and are overpowered by the majority. Great Britain possesses two of them at present, of whom one has acquired an undoubted claim to our esteem by his seniority, and the other, although somewhat of a charlatan, has still done much good.

British tyranny, to which we have alluded in Note 129, has adopted a bad system: it does not wait until a man has spoken, in order to oppose and ridicule his speech, but does

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it even before he has begun. This was the case on the occasion of the motions of the old and of the young member. With the first it did not disdain to give some grounds; but with the latter it threatened "with the writ point of the sheriff's officer, the truncheon of the police, and a body of men in scarlet garb with glittering steel;" but at the same time it advised him not to meddle with that matter, stating that it was of no use—

"—— de faire sur tout un bruit démesuré,
Un méchant million, plus ou moins dévoré,
Voilà-t-il pas de quoi pousser des cris sinistres!
Mon cher, les grands seigneurs ne sont pas de vos cuistres.
Ils vivent largement. Je parle sans phébus.
Le bel air que celui d'un redresseur d'abus
Toujours bouffi d'orgueil et rouge de colère!
Mais bah! vous voulez être un gaillard populaire,
Adoré des bourgeois et des merchands d'esteufs.
C'est fort drôle. Ayez donc des caprices plus neufs.
Les intérêts publics? Songer d'abord aux votres.
Le salut de l'Espagne est un mot creux que d'autres
Feront sonner, mon cher, tout aussi bien que vous.
La popularité? C'est la gloire en gros sous.
Rôder, dogue aboyant, tout autour des gabelles?
Charmant métier! je sais des postures plus belles.
Vertu? foi? probité? c'est du clinquant déteint.
C'était usé déja du temps de Charles-Quint."—[Ruy Blas.]

166. *Recent Proposals made to Government.*

Amund says here, that "the murmurs of the unreasonably discontented are certainly acts of ingratitude against a good king; but it were far more dangerous," continues he, "to attempt stifling the voice of the people; it is the path by which truth gains admittance to the throne; it is a warning call of Providence, which reminds the prince not to pursue the wrong course he has entered."

That warning has been disregarded by most of the European governments, and has consequently produced the unfortunate conflicts which every feeling man must deplore. By applying it to England we find that sufficient attention is not even paid to the voice of the people. We will not pretend that the expressions of the Peace Society, the meetings at Manchester, and elsewhere, are the voice of the whole nation; they were merely brought forth by some ambitious leaders. Nevertheless, as the proposals of the individuals who represent that part of the nation are patriotic and

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peaceful, they should not be looked upon with contempt, by tyrannical papers. We will admit that one of these proposals is erroneous in its form, and that the new scholar in diplomacy is not able to prescribe the steps which experienced diplomatists should follow; but, considering the purpose by itself, which is to produce and maintain peace, and to reduce standing armies, whereby the burthen of nations may be lessened, it is the most laudable object that policy can attain.

167. *Majority and Minority.*

The actual position of the commoners with government resembles a strong tissue, wherein the commoners represent the double web, and the government the woof. One portion of the web is the majority, and the other the minority; but the strong thread of the woof passes between the two, and imparts strength to the tissue. This metaphor is the more applicable, since the threads of the upper and lower web remain united in one constant direction, except when one of them perchance departs from them. Just the same may be said of the majority and minority, who always remain stationary in their number. Their voices do not move from their party, even for the best and most patriotic motions, which have nearly always the same result, in being adopted or rejected, a system which alone can excuse the late unparliamentary expression, of a very honourable member who found that "he was sold."

168. *Reform of Representation.*

The Reform Act, 2nd William IV., c. 45, orders, "That no person shall be entitled to vote for a county member, in respect of any freehold, who shall not be in actual occupation of the lands or tenements, unless such lands, &c., have come to him by devise, marriage, or promotion to any benefice or office; or unless they shall be of the clear annual value of £10 above all charges to which they may be liable." The privilege of voting is extended to copyhold property on the same conditions as to holders of freehold property. The existing rights of forty-shilling freeholders are secured.

The elective franchise is also extended to every person holding lands or tenements, as lessee or assignee, originally created for a term not less than sixty years, on the same conditions as to holders of freehold or copyhold property; and this privilege is further extended to lessees or assignees for a term not less than twenty years, provided the property

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shall be to them of the clear annual value of £50. Mortgagees are entitled to vote if they be in actual possession, or in receipt of the rents and profits of the estate.

But, if such property gives a right to vote in the election of a member or members for any city or borough, it disqualifies the person, whether he be a freeholder, copyholder, lessee, or mortgagee, for voting for a county member.

It further enacts that every such person intending to exercise the elective franchise for such property must be duly registered; and that in respect to lands or tenements of freehold, copyhold, or customary tenures, the individual must have been in possession, or in the receipt of the rents and profits, for six calendar months previous to the last day of July in such year, in order to registration; and that no individual shall be registered in respect of lands or tenements, held by him as lessee or assignee, who has not been in possession, &c., for twelve calendar months next previous to the last day of July in such year: but this enactment does dot extend to any lands or tenements which would otherwise entitle the owner, holder, &c. to vote in any such election, which shall come to any person at any time within such respective periods of six or twelve calendar months by descent, succession, marriage, devise, or promotion to any benefice or office.

With respect to the election of members for cities or boroughs, or any place sharing in the election for cities and boroughs, the elective franchise is extended to every individual who occupies, as owner or tenant, any house, warehouse, counting-house, or shop, of the clear annual value of £10, provided he shall have been in possession twelve calendar months, and resided in the city or borough six months next previous to the last day of July in the year in which he tendered his registration.

Nor is it necessary that it should be the same house, &c., but different premises in immediate succession will entitle him to vote. But the act provides that every person entitled to vote for the member or members of any city or town, being a county of itself, shall in future be entitled to vote, provided he be duly registered, and if in the receipt of the rents for twelve months from 31st of July.

The existing rights of freemen are reserved, but they must be resident six months. The reason assigned for requiring any qualification in voters with regard to property is, to exclude all those persons who are in so dependant a situation as not to be in a position to exercise a will of their

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own. This would necessarily place them at the disposal of others, and an ambitious and wealthy man, by an improper influence, might obtain a larger share in elections than might be consistent with general liberty. We do not, however, altogether acquiesce in the validity of this reason; for, if this were the ground upon which the limitation of suffrage proceeded, nothing is more evident than that it ought to be curtailed within a much narrower boundary. Votes never have been and never will be independent to a very great degree. We should rather conceive that it arises from the necessity of controlling the natural right to bring it into a just accordance with social right. The natural rapacity of man is to possess himself, when he stands in need, of the property of others. In society the majority are poor, and there is a natural tendency in the mass of every community to possess themselves of the property of the wealthier classes. If this natural bias be not repressed, it will overflow, to the ruin of society. But, if there were no qualification, it is easy to perceive that numbers would prevail, pursue their natural bias, and trample on social law.

At all events, all popular governments have been obliged to resort to some standard of qualification. The British constitution steers a middle course between the two extremes of numbers and property; and, in adhering to it, our safety depends.

Other forms of representation have lately been demanded for Great Britain. We will not permit ourselves to give a judgment in so difficult a subject, which requires to be studied for life-time, and must confide in the enlightened reasons of members who have had forty years' experience in parliament. General suffrage now admitted in various countries should be rejected; as the people may be easily misled, and experience, which imparts to them moderate opinions, is sometimes purchased at great sacrifice. However we hope that British legislators will discover when this question comes *á l'ordre du jour*, the right ways and means of complying with the wish of the nation, in the best and most peaceable manner.*

* In a little work which the author has under his pen, (but not intended for England, being in a foreign language,) he endeavours to explain his opinion that the people might be represented in a different manner than that based on landed property and income. It is true that land has been, and is still, the greatest and most real scale of property; but many others have, in modern times, competed with it, as we have already said: as manufactures, ships, mines, railways, &c., which all now represent almost as secure property as land. We have seen that in times of general distrust the value of estates diminished momentarily in the same proportion, and

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169. *Happy situation of Great Britain.*

Great Britain enoys that fortunate situation, and stands higher in that repcejt, than any other nation. The character of its institutions has been fearfully tried, and their worth triumphantly established. Exterior enemies will never find a faction to trouble the country; and there is no fear of an attack from abroad, even in such an improbable case, means of defence would be speedily found, without having so great a number of armed vessels and scarlet garbs ready.

170. *Question of Short or Long Parliaments.*

Amund rejects here the election for a short period, but admits those for three or for seven years. This is a question of the present day, and requires great consideration. The short duration of one year is, at all events, rejectable, even if it be for the pompous and illusive dignity of a lord mayor, the maintenance of which is an honourable tribute of the aristocracy to the citizens; and its sudden change has, perhaps, been introduced, in order that every alderman may be able to enjoy that momentary grandeur; but the good that such a magistrate could produce, if his functions were greater than those of a magistrate in a police court, and a host of public dinners, and if he remained longer in office, and were, from longer study and knowledge, the true representative of the citizens, is extinguished by his short duration as lord mayor. As regards the three and seven years' parliament, the advantage of the shortest period would be that

almost more, than other goods and chattels. The mentioned opinion of the author is, that representation might be effected as well by the corporations of the different branches of industry, namely, by "labour;" of which Locke explained one hundred and fifty years ago, that "of the products of the earth useful to the life of man, nine-tenths are the effect of labour: nay, if we will rightly estimate things as they come to our use, and cast up the several expenses about them, what in them is purely owing to nature, and what to labour, we shall find, that in most of them ninety-nine in a hundred are wholly to be put to the account of labour." The author has also endeavoured to show in what way the bodies, which should represent the general industry of the country, should be formed. This does not imply that the army, the navy, the clergy, and the fine arts, should not likewise have their representatives. But with respect to industry, he developes at the same time the principle that "every individual who enjoys a revenue, or a function in any manufacturing, or railway establishment, whether as proprietor, manager, administrator, or shareholder, should be considered as a member of a "Polytechnic Confederation," towards the prosperity of which he should contribute (besides his other duties as a citizen,) a portion of his intelligence as well as of his fortune. Every one of these individuals who occupies a lofty position, should descend some degrees in order to raise his subordinates nearer his own station. This would constitute real fraternity, without abolishing subordination." But protesting against any idea of modern socialism, the author also fears that his project would not sound well to the ears of the British industrial aristocracy.

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the electors might change their representatives sooner than at present if they found them not fitted for the task intrusted them. But, again, it should be considered that every function must be studied and practised. A member who is not fitted for parliamentary purposes in the first or even in the second year, may acquire the necessary qualities in the course of a longer period, and then develop his hitherto unknown talents. As parliament assembled at the end of the mournful year 1847, the result of their very long session was very little. In the present session, more active spirit has been developed, and praiseworthy attempts for the general welfare made. If such men were longer in function, the golden time of British parliaments might return with Percivals, Wilberforces, Burdetts, &c.; but if they are altered after a year's time, it will really be a pity for such eminent talents as the above to be stifled at their birth, and a new education of members to be made.

171 and 172. *Representatives should be worthy of sitting at the Rudder of Government.*

The time which Alfred prophecied arrived six hundred years ago; during which, the people were more or less able to govern themselves, and the representatives more or less worthy of sitting at the rudder of government.

Our purpose in publishing this little work is free from any self or factious interest; and it is to awaken the sacred original principles, and remind the representatives by warnings, to be at all times "worthy to sit at the rudder of government;" for Montesquieu, who bestows the greatest praise upon the British constitution, concludes thus:—"Comme toute les choses humaines ont une fin, l'état dont nous parlons perdra sa liberté, il périra. Rome, Lacédémone et Carthage ont bien péri. Il périra lorsque la puissance législative sera plus corrompue que l'éxécutrice."

The same opinion is expressed by Sir. T. Mortimer in the following words:—"If ministerial influence in parliament should prevail so far as constantly to assure a majority in the House of Commons in favour of every measure indiscriminately, which the reigning administration thinks proper to adopt and to persist in, then farewell to the political pre-eminence of the British empire! for glory dwells not with slaves, but increases or diminishes with the liberty of the people."

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BOOK VI.

173. *Othar's Voyages.*

Haller has joined to Othar's real voyages those to the shores of East Greenland and Spitzbergen, which were effected by Wulfstan. Both are positively authentic, although he pretends not to have taken them from Othar's own description. Whether Alfred's work was the source wherefrom he derived his knowledge, or whether there are other authentic works on Othar's voyages, may be explained better by those learned in the Anglo-Saxon history, which we do not pretend to be.

174. *Othar's success in obtaining Ships for his Voyages.*

Othar was animated by his prophetical ideas, like Columbus in a similar circumstance. We cannot suppose him to have been gifted with more eloquence than the genial and instructed Columbus, and must therefore attribute to Alfred's enlightened mind that Othar had not to apply to all the different sovereigns in Europe before he succeeded in obtaining a few ships for his great undertaking.

175 & 176. *Sociality in a State of Nature.*

In a former note we have already explained the state o society in that of nature. Here, however, we see that of sociality and equality practised in its original purity; but we doubt whether such a kind of social living, produced rather by bestiality than by philosophy, might be transferred to more populous countries and warmer climates, where passion prevails over stoicity.

177. *Cruelty practised towards Children.*

This custom, as cruel as it is, is even surpassed by the Chinese, who kill a number of their children when they cannot bring them up. The latter cannot be excused, as their

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country is far more civilized than that of these savages, and because they are enlightened by wholesome laws. The shadow of justification for such cruelty, which lies in the scarcity of food in these overpopulated dominions, cannot be admitted as a sufficient reason for such cruelty; for, were we to do so, how could we, with justice, condemn similar actions in European countries.

178. *Marriages and Filial Piety.*

"Marriages are just as constant and harmonizing as with other nations." That depends upon *what* other nations Haller meant. Probably not the French or Italians; but the German and English. We do not, however, know whether the soft sounding word, "harmony," can at all be applied to married life, and whether "unity" would not be more appropriate, as so many disonancies in married life prevent the effection of any complete harmony.

The reason why unfertility is despised is very well explained. The "Sacred Edict" says: "Bring up a child, and then you will know the kindness of a father and mother." . . . "Filial pity is [founded on] the unalterable statutes of heaven, the corresponding operation of earth, and the common obligations of all people. Have those who are void of filial piety never reflected on the natural affection of parents to their children?" . . . "The son of man that would recompense one in ten thousand of the favours of his parents, should at home exhaust his whole heart, abroad exert his whole strength."

179. *Origin of Property.*

"Superfluity forms there the only difference which raises one man above another." The superfluity alluded to is pecuniary; and whoever contests that right to superfluity also contests the right to property. A celebrated French political author lately wrote a treatise on property, wherein he does not reach Locke, who speaks on this subject as follows:—

"God, who hath given the world to men in common, hath also given them reason to make use of it to the best advantage of life and convenience. The earth, and all that is therein, is given to men for the support and comfort of their being. And though all the fruits it naturally produces, and beasts it feeds, belong to mankind in common, as they are produced by the spontaneous hand of nature; and nobody has originally a private dominion, exclusive of the rest of

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mankind, in any of them, as they are thus in their natural state: yet being given for the use of men, there must of necessity be a means to appropriate them some way or other before they can be of any use, or at all beneficial to any pacticular man. The fruit, or venison, which nourishes the wild Indian, who knows no inclosure, and is still a tenant in common, must be his, and so his, *i. e.* a part of him, that another can no longer have any right to it, before it can do him any good for the support of his life.

"Though the earth, and all inferior creatures be common to all men, yet every man has a *property* in his own *person*. This nobody has any right to but himself. The *labour* of his body, and the *work* of his hands, we may say, are properly his. Whatsoever then he removes out of the state that nature hath provided, and left it in, he hath mixed his labour with it, and joined to it something that is his own, and thereby makes it his property. It being by him removed from the common state nature placed it in, it hath by this labour something annexed to it, that excludes the common right of other men. For this *labour* being the unquestionable property of the labourer, no man but he can have a right to what that is once joined to, at least where there is enough, and as good left in common for others.

"He that is nourished by the acorns he picked up under an oak, or the apples he gathered from the trees in the wood, has certainly appropriated them to himself. Nobody can deny but the nourishment is his. I ask then, When did they begin to be his? When he digested? Or when he ate? Or when he boiled? Or when he brought them home? Or when he picked them up? And it is plain, if the first gathering made them not his, nothing else could. That labour put a distinction between them and common. That added something to them more than nature, the common mother of all, had done; and so they became his private right. And will any one say he had no right to those acorns or apples he thus appropriated, because he had not the consent of all mankind to make them his? Was it a robbery thus to assume to himself what belonged to all in common? If such a consent as that was necessary, man had starved, notwithstanding the plenty God had given him. We see in commons, which remain so by compact, that it is the taking any part of what is common, and removing it out of the state nature leaves it in, which begins the property; without which the common is of no use. And the taking of this or that part, does not depend on the express consent of all the

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commoners. Thus the grass my horse has bit; the turfs my servant has cut; and the ore I have digged in any place, where I have a right to them in common with others, become my property, without the assignation or consent of anybody. The labour that was mine, removing them out of that common state they were in, hath fixed my property in them.

"By making an explicit consent of every commoner, necessary to any one's appropriating to himself any part of what is given in common, children or servants could not cut the meat which their father or master had provided for them in common, without assigning to every one his peculiar part. Though the water running in the fountain be every one's, yet who can doubt but that in the pitcher is his only who drew it out? His labour hath taken it out of the hands of nature where it was common, and hath thereby appropriated it to himself."

180. *History of Five Robinson Crusoes.*

This history of a steersman (whose name is said to have been Himkoff) and his companions, is quite authentic.

181. *Infancy of Man.*

"Children," says Locke, are not born in the full state of equality [of men] though they are born to it. Their parents have a sort of rule and jurisdiction over them when they come into the world, and for some time after, but it is but a temporary one. The bonds of this subjection are like the swaddling clothes they are wrapped up in, and supported by in the weakness of their infancy. Age and reason as they grow up, loosen them till at length they drop quite off, and leave a man at his own own free disposal.

"Adam," continues Locke, as a tradition of the holy scriptures, "was created as a perfect man. His body and mind in full possession of their strength and reason, and so was capable from the first instant of his being to provide for his own support and preservation, and govern his actions according to the dictates of the law of reason God had implanted in him. From him the world is peopled with his descendants, who are all born infants, weak and helpless, without knowledge or understanding. But to supply the defects of this imperfect state, till the improvement of growth and age hath improved them, Adam and Eve, and after them all parents were by the law of nature under an obligation to preserve, nourish, and educate the children they had begotten, not as their own workmanship, but the

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workmanship of their own Maker, the Almighty, to whom they were to be accountable for them."

182. *Examples of worthy Landowners.*

The reader will already have discovered these descriptions to apply to Poland, and the various countries now forming the empire of Russia.

Our author says,—"Their servile subjects have nothing to hope of their hard masters, and nothing to loose by their destruction." This state may in some degree be compared to that of Ireland, for the Irish peasantry are also in certain points the slaves of their masters, although not to the same extent. Legislation is now occupied in ameliorating the laws of the Irish landlords and tenants, as well as the Irish poor rate, and assisting them with money through labour; but then can the landlords do nothing themselves without being assisted or forced by government? we will believe that, for want of capital, that country is not fitted for manufactures in general; but there are many manufactures which could very well be combined with agriculture, and which produce almost greater real wealth and felicity than those executed by manual labour and machinery in populous districts; we mean those closely connected with agriculture, as brewing, distilling, brick-making, &c. We have known in Germany an individual, originally a merchant, who bought several estates, and erected upon them a model agriculture establishment, with the adjoining branches, as the rearing of sheep and horned cattle, horses, botanical gardens, nursery, a brewery, distillery, steam engine, and rural implements, manufactory, pottery, and many other industrial branches. We can easily conceive that one man could not administer at all these different establishments, not even through clerks, that is, if it should be faithfully done; but he employed other means; he engaged young men of education, knowledge, and energy, (although not possessed of capital,) and entered with them into partnership, (*en commandité*,) bound them to a central office, and to deliver up the cash to a general bank, from which they could receive the required supplies. By this very simple mode of organization, he not only secured and increased his own fortune, but made that of his directors and a great number of families. This man was a plebeian, and could therefore be reckoned among the aristocracy of money and knowledge; but we have a similar example in an aristocrat from birth, a count in the Silesian

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mountains, who followed the same steps on a larger scale, and occupied in his different manufacturing establishments an immense number of individuals. Are such examples not worthy of imitation? But we have no doubt that England possesses likewise land-holders who fulfil, if not all, at least a portion of the task of making their peasants happy by giving them sufficient occupation.

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CONCLUSION.

183. *Man in a State of Nature.*

The state of man in nature, and the law of nature, are extremely well described by Locke and other authors; from the former we have already given several extracts in preceding notes, but our space does not allow us to quote that work farther, as we otherwise would wish to do.

184. *Moderate Monarchy.*

[The reference to this Note was inadvertently omitted in the text.]

A compound of monarch, aristocracy, and democracy, has been framed by the German States into a new form of government, which gave it originally the title of a composite system. It was afterwards adopted by the Gothic nations; and writers of those days give it the name of "*Gothic balance*," (a balance wherein England has sought, more or less, to attain the ideal standard of freedom,) but in modern times it has been universally known and understood by its proper definition of mixed, regulated, or

Moderate Monarchy.

FINIS.

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